

A
Letter To
Dr. Adam Smith.

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A
LETTER
TO



DR. ADAM SMITH.

SIR,

YOU have been lately employed in embalming a philosopher; his *body*, I believe I must say; for concerning the other part of him, neither you nor he seemed to have entertained an idea, sleeping or waking. Else, it surely might have claimed a little of your care and attention; and one would think, the belief of the soul's existence and immortality could do harm, if it did no good, in a *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. But every gentleman understands his own business best.

Will you do an unknown correspondent the honour, Sir, to accept a few plain remarks, in a free and easy way, upon the curious letter to Mr. STRAHAN, in which this ever memorable operation of *embalming* is performed? Our philosopher's account of *his own life* will likewise be considered as we go along.

I trust me, good Doctor, I am no bigot, enthusiast, or enemy to human learning—*Et ego in Arcadia*—I have made many a hearty meal, in private, upon CICERO and VIRGIL, as well as Mr. HUME¹. Few persons (though perhaps as Mr. HUME says,

¹ *Ess.*, p. 5.

upon a like occasion, "I ought not to judge on that subject") have a quicker relish for the productions of genius, and the beauties of composition. It is therefore as little in my intention, as it is in my power, to prejudice the literary character of your friend. From some of his writings I have received great pleasure, and have ever esteemed his *History of England* to have been a noble effort of *Matter and Motion*. But when a man takes it into his head to do mischief, you must be sensible, Sir, the Public has always reason to lament his being a *clever fellow*.

I hope it will not be deemed vanity in me likewise to say, that I have in my composition a large proportion of that, which our inimitable SHAKESPEARE styles, *the milk of human kindness*. I never knew what envy or hatred was; and am ready, at all times, to praise, wherever I can do it in honour and conscience. DAVID, I doubt not, was, as you affirm, a social agreeable person, of a convivial turn, told a good story, and played well at "his favourite game of whist". I know not that JOHN THE PAINTER did the same. But there is no absurdity in the supposition. If he did not, he might have done it—Doctor, be not offended—I mean no harm. I would only infer thus much, that I could not, on that account, bring myself absolutely to approve his odd fancy of firing all the dockyards in the kingdom.

Concerning the *philosophical opinions* of Mr. HUME you observe², that "men will, no doubt, judge variously." They are certainly at liberty so to do, because the author himself did the same. Sometimes, to be sure, he esteemed them ingenious, deep, subtle, elegant, and calculated to diffuse his literary fame to the ends of the world. But, at other times, he judged very differently; very much so, indeed.

¹ LIFE, &c. p. 43.

² Ibid, p. 59.

"I dine," says he, "I play a game at back-gammon, I converse, and am merry with my friends; and when, after three or four hours' amusement, I would return to these speculations, they appear so *cold*, so *strained*, and so *ridiculous*, that I cannot find in my heart to enter into them any farther¹." Now, Sir, if you only will give me leave to judge, before dinner, of Mr. HUME's philosophy, as he judged of it after dinner, we shall have no further dispute upon that subject. I could indeed wish, if it were possible, to have a scheme of thought, which would bear contemplating, at any time of the day; because, otherwise, a person must be at the expence of maintaining a brace of these metaphysical Hobby-Horses, one to mount in the morning, and the other in the afternoon.

After all, Sir, friend as I am to freedom of opinion, (and no one living can be more so,) I am rather sorry, methinks, that men should judge so *variously* of Mr. HUME's philosophical speculations. For since the design of them is to banish out of the world every idea of truth and comfort, salvation and immortality, a future state, and the providence, and even existence of GOD, it seems a pity, that we cannot be all of a mind about them, though we might have formerly liked to hear the author crack a joke, over a bottle in his life-time. And I could have been well pleased to have been informed, by you, Sir, that before his death, he had ceased to number among his happy effusions tracts of this kind and tendency.

For—(let me come a little closer to you, Dr. if you please, upon this subject—Don't be under any apprehensions—my name does not begin with a B—) Are *you* sure, and can you make *us* sure, that there

¹ *Treatise on Human Nature*, i. 467. In the Postscript to this Letter, a view will be exhibited of the HUMAN system, taken exactly as it appeared to its author at six o'clock in the evening.

really exist no such things as a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments? If so, all is well. Let us *then*, in our last hours, read LUCIAN, and play at WHIST, and droll upon CHARON, and his boat¹; let us die as foolish and insensible, as much like our brother philosophers, the calves of the field, and the asses of the desert as we can, for the life of us. But—if such things BE—as they most certainly ARE—is it right in you, Sir, to hold up to our view, as “perfectly wise and virtuous²,” the *character* and *conduct* of one who seems to have been possessed with an incurable antipathy to all that is called RELIGION; and who strained every nerve to explode, suppress, and extirpate the spirit of it among men, that its very name, if he could effect it, might no more be had in remembrance? Are we, do you imagine, to be reconciled to a character of this sort, and fall in love with it, because its owner was *good company*, and knew how to manage his *cards*? Lo, as the age is fallen, I will venture to hope it has grace enough yet left, to resent such usage as this.

You endeavour to entertain us with some *pleasant conceits* that were supposed by Mr. HUME to pass between himself and old CHARON. The philosopher tells the old gentleman that “he had been endeavouring to open the eyes of the public:” that he was “correcting his works for a new edition,” from which great things were to be expected; in short, “if he could but live a few years longer, (and that was the only reason why he would wish to do so,) he might have the satisfaction of seeing the downfall of some of the prevailing systems of *superstition*.”³

We all know, Sir, what the word superstition denotes, in Mr. HUME’s vocabulary, and against what Religion his shafts are levelled, under that name.

¹ *LIFE*, &c. p. 47, et seq.

² *Ibid.* p. 62.

³ *Ibid.* p. 50.

But Dr. SMITH, do you believe, or would you have us to believe, that it is CHARON, who calls us out of the world at the appointed time? Doth not HE call us out of it, who sent us into it? Let me, then, present you with a paraphrase of the Wish, as addressed to HIM, to whom it should, and to whom alone, with any sense and propriety, it can be addressed. Thus it runs:

“LORD, I have only one reason why I would wish to live. Suffer me so to do, I most humbly beseech thee, yet a little while, till mine eyes shall behold the success of my undertaking to overthrow, by my metaphysics, the faith which thy SON descended from heaven to plant, and to root out the knowledge and the love of thee from the earth.”

Here are no rhetorical figures, no hyperboles or exaggerations. The matter is even so. I appeal, in the face of the world, Sir, to yourself and to every man who can read and understand the writings of Mr. HUME whether this be not, in plain, honest English, the drift of his *philosophy* as it is called; for the promulgation of which alone he wished to live: and concerning which you are pleased to say coolly, “men will judge variously, every one approving or condemning these opinions, according as they happen to coincide, or disagree with his own¹.” Our thoughts are very naturally carried back upon this occasion, to the author of the *first philosophy*, who likewise engaged to *open the eyes of the Public*—He did so; but the only discovery they found themselves able to make, was—that they were NAKED.

You talk much, Sir, of our philosopher’s *gentleness of manners, good nature, compassion, generosity, charity*. Alas, Sir, whither were they all fled, when he so often sat down calmly and deliberately to ob-

¹ LIFE, &c. p. 59.

literate from the hearts of the human species every trace of the knowledge of GOD and his dispensations ; all faith in his kind providence, and fatherly protection ; all hope of enjoying his grace, and favour, here, or hereafter ; all love of him, and of their brethren for his sake ; all the patience under tribulation, all the comforts in time of sorrow, derived from these fruitful and perennial sources ? Did a good man think himself able, by the force of metaphysic incantation, in a moment, to blot the sun out of heaven, and dry up every fountain upon earth, would he attempt to do it ?—TULLY had but a faint glimpse of the country to which we are all travelling ; yet, so pleasing was any the most imperfect and shadowy prospect into futurity, that TULLY declared, no man should ravish it from him¹. And surely, TULLY was a philosopher as well as HUME. O had he seen the light which shone upon HUME, he would not have closed his eyes against it ; had the same cup been offered to him, he would not have dashed it untasted from him !

“ Perhaps our modern sceptics are ignorant, that without the belief of a GOD, and the hope of immortality, the miseries of human life would often be insupportable. But can I suppose them in a state of total and invincible stupidity, utter strangers to the human heart, and to human affairs ? Sure, they would not thank me for such a supposition. Yet this I must suppose, or I must believe them to be the most cruel, the most perfidious, and the most profligate of men. Caressed by those who call themselves the great, engrossed by the formalities of life, intoxicated with vanity, pampered with adulation, dissipated in the tumult of business, or amidst the vicissitudes of

¹ Quod si in hoc erro, quod animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro ; nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorquere volo. DE SENECA, ad fin.

folly, they perhaps have little need and little relish for the consolations of religion. But let them know that, in the solitary scenes of life, there is many an honest and tender heart pining with incurable anguish, pierced with the sharpest sting of disappointment, bereft of friends, chilled with poverty, racked with disease, scourged by the oppressor, whom nothing but trust in Providence, and the hope of a future retribution could preserve from the agonies of despair. And do they, with sacrilegious hands, attempt to violate this last refuge of the miserable, and to rob them of the only comfort that had survived the ravages of misfortune, malice and tyranny? Did it ever happen, that the influence of their execrable tenets disturbed the tranquillity of virtuous retirement, deepened the gloom of human distress, or aggravated the horrors of the grave? It is possible that this may have happened in many instances? Is it probable that this hath happened in one single instance?—Ye traitors to human kind, ye murderers of the human soul, how can ye answer for it to your own hearts! Surely, every spark of your generosity is extinguished for ever, if this consideration do not awaken in you the keenest remorse, and make you wish in bitterness of soul—But I remonstrate in vain. All this must have often occurred to you, and as often been rejected, as utterly frivolous. Could I enforce the present topic by an appeal to your vanity, I might possibly make some impression. But to plead with you on the principles of BENEVOLENCE or GENEROSITY, is to address you in a language ye do not, or will not, understand; and as to the shame of being convicted of absurdity, ignorance, or want of candour, ye have long ago proved yourselves superior to the sense of it.—But let not the lovers of truth be discouraged. Atheism cannot be of long continuance, nor is there much danger of its becoming universal. The influence of some conspicuous

characters hath brought it too much into fashion ; which, in a thoughtless and profligate age, it is no difficult matter to accomplish. But when men have retrieved the powers of serious reflection, they will find it a frightful phantom ; and the mind will return gladly and eagerly to its old endearments. One thing we certainly know ; the fashion of sceptical and metaphysical systems passeth away. Those unnatural productions, the vile effusions of a hard and stupid heart, that mistakes its own restlessness for the activity of genius, and its own captiousness for sagacity of understanding, may, like other monsters, please awhile by their singularity ; but the charm is soon over ; and the succeeding age will be astonished to hear, that their forefathers were deluded, or amused, with such fooleries."

You, Sir, have read the preceding paragraph before ; but this Letter may come into the hands of many who have not. It is the alarum-bell to the admirers of Mr. HUME ; and should be rung in their ears, till succeeded by the last trumpet.

And now, Sir, will you give me leave to ask you a few questions ? Why all this hurry and bustle, this eagerness to gratify the pretended "impatience of the public¹," and satisfy it, that our philosopher lived and died perfectly composed and easy ? Was there, then, any suspicion, in SCOTLAND, that he might not, at times, be quite so composed, and easy as he should have been ? Was there any particular BOOK ever written against him, that shook his system to pieces about his ears, and reduced it to a heap of ruins, the success and eclat of which might be supposed to have hurt his mind, and to have affected his health ? Was there any AUTHOR, whose name his friends never dared to mention before him, and warned all strangers that were introduced to him, against doing it, because he never failed, when by

¹ Preface to LIFE, &c.

any incident it was done, to fly out into a transport of passion and swearing¹? Was it deemed necessary, or expedient, on this account, that he should represent himself, and that you should represent him, to have been perfectly secure of the growth and increase of his philosophic reputation, as if no book had been written, which had impaired it; it having been judged much easier to dissemble the fall of DAGON, than to *set him upon his stumps again*? I am a South Briton, and consequently not acquainted with what passes so far in the opposite quarter. You, Sir, can inform us how these things are; and likewise, when the great work of *benevolence* and *charity*, of *wisdom* and *virtue*, shall be crowned by the publication of a treatise designed to prove the SOUL'S MORTALITY, and another to justify and recommend SELF-MURDER; for which, without doubt, the present and every future age will bless the name of the *gentle and amiable* author!

Upon the whole, Doctor, your meaning is good; but I think you will not succeed this time. You would persuade us, by the example of DAVID HUME, Esq. that atheism is the only cordial for low spirits, and the proper antidote against the fear of death. But surely he who can reflect, with complacency, on a friend thus misemploying his talents in his life, and then amusing himself with LUCIAN, WHIST, and CHARON, at his death, may smile over BABYLON in ruins; esteem the earthquake, which destroyed

¹ "I was a man of mild disposition, of command of temper, little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling passion, never soured my temper." LIFE, p. 32. Yet even by what is said of the Reverends and Right Reverends—Bishop WARBURTON, Bishop HURD, the *Zealots* (that is, the *Christians*,) and of the resolution once taken to "change his name and to settle in France," because his writings did not meet with sufficient encouragement—by these circumstances, I say, there seems to have been something of the *irritable* in his constitution. But these are trifles. My quarry lies not this way, at present. I fly at nobler game. The atrocious wickedness of diffusing atheism through the land, is a subject which concerns every body.

LISBON, an agreeable occurrence ; and congratulate the hardened PHARAOH on his overthrow in the Red Sea. Drollery, in such circumstances, is neither more nor less than—

Moody madness, laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Would we know the baneful and pestilential influences of false philosophy on the human heart ? We need only contemplate them in this most deplorable instance of Mr. HUME.

These sayings, Sir, may appear harsh ; but they are salutary. And if departed spirits have any knowledge of what is passing upon earth, that person will be regarded by your friend as rendering him the truest services, who, by energy of expression, and warmth of exhortation, shall most contribute to prevent his writings from producing those effects upon mankind, which he no longer wishes they should produce. Let no man deceive himself, or be deceived by others. It is the voice of eternal TRUTH, which crieth aloud, and saith to you, Sir, and to me, and to all the world—*He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him*¹.

By way of contrast to the behaviour of Mr. HUME, at the close of a life passed *without GOD in the world*, permit me, Sir, to lay before yourself, and the public, the last sentiments of the truly learned, judicious, and admirable HOOKER, who had spent *his* days in the service of his Maker and Redeemer.

After this manner, therefore, spake the author of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, immediately before he expired :

“ I have lived to see that this world is made up of perturbations ; and I have been long preparing to

¹ John iii. 36.

leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near. And though I have, by his grace, loved Him in my youth, and feared Him in mine age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence, towards Him, and towards all men; yet, if thou, Lord, shouldst be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it? And therefore where I have failed, Lord shew mercy to me; for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, through His merits who died to purchase pardon for penitent sinners. And since I owe thee a death, Lord let it not be terrible, and then take thine own time; I submit to it. Let not mine, O Lord, but thy will be done!—God hath heard my daily petitions; for I am at peace with all men, and He is at peace with me. From such blessed assurance I feel that inward joy which this world can neither give nor take from me. My conscience beareth me this witness; and this witness makes the thoughts of death joyful. I could wish to live, to do the Church more service; but cannot hope it; for my days are past, as a shadow that returns not."

His worthy Biographer adds: "More he would have spoken, but his spirits failed him; and, after a short conflict between nature and death, a quiet sigh put a period to his last breath, and so, he fell asleep—And now he seems to rest like Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Let me here draw his curtain, till, with the most glorious company of the Patriarchs and Apostles, and the most noble army of martyrs and confessors, this most learned, most humble, most holy man shall also awake to receive an eternal tranquillity, and with it a greater degree of glory, than common Christians shall be made partakers of."

Doctor SMITH, when the hour of his departure hence shall arrive, will copy the example of the

BELIEVER, or the **INFIDEL**, as it liketh him best. I must freely own, I have no opinion of that reader's *head* or *heart*, who will not exclaim, as I find myself obliged to do—

Let ME die the death of the Righteous, and let MY last end be like his!

I am, Sir,

Your very sincere

Well-wisher, and

Humble Servant,

One of the people called **CHRISTIANS**.

POSTSCRIPT.

As it is possible, Sir, nay, probable, that this little tract, because it is a little one, may be perused by many, who have not leisure or inclination to go through large volumes, and yet wish to know what Mr. HUME's philosophical system is; I shall here subjoin a short but comprehensive summary of the doctrines which compose it, drawn up some few years ago, by a learned gentleman, for his amusement, with proper references to those parts of our philosopher's works, where such doctrines were to be found. And though I never heard the compiler had the thanks of Mr. HUME for so doing, yet neither could I ever find, that he or his friends disputed the fidelity and accuracy with which it was done¹.

A SUMMARY OF MR. HUME'S DOCTRINES, METAPHYSICAL AND MORAL.

OF THE SOUL.

That the soul of man is not the same this moment, that it was the last; that we know not what it is; that it is not one, but many things, and that it is nothing at all.

That in this soul is the agency of all the causes that operate throughout the sensible creation; and yet that in this soul there is neither power nor agency, nor any idea of either.

That matter and motion may often be regarded as the cause of thought.

¹ See Dr. BEATTIE's Essay on Truth, Part II. ch. i. sect. 1, and Part III. ch. ii.

OF THE UNIVERSE.

That the external world does not exist, or at least, that its existence may reasonably be doubted.

That the universe exists in the mind, and that the mind does not exist.

That the universe is nothing but a heap of perceptions, without a substance.

That though a man could bring himself to believe, yea, and have reason to believe, that every thing in the universe proceeds from some cause; yet it would be unreasonable for him to believe, that the universe itself proceeds from a cause.

OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

That the perfection of human knowledge is to doubt.

That we ought to doubt of every thing, yea, of our doubts themselves, and therefore the utmost that philosophy can do, is to give us a doubtful solution of doubtful doubts'.

That the human understanding, acting alone, does entirely subvert itself, and prove by argument, that by argument nothing can be proved.

That man, in all his perceptions, actions, and volitions, is a mere passive machine, and has no separate existence of his own, being entirely made up of other things, of the existence of which he is by no means certain; and yet, that the nature of all things depends so much upon man, that two and two could not be equal to four, nor fire produce heat, nor the sun light, without an act of the human understanding.

fourth section of Mr. HUME's *Essays on the Human Understanding* is called *Sceptical doubts concerning the operations of the Understanding*; and the fifth section bears this title, *Sceptical solution of those doubts*.

OF GOD.

That it is unreasonable to believe GOD to be infinitely wise and good, while there is any evil or disorder in the universe.

That we have no good reason to think the universe proceeds from a cause.

That as the existence of the external world is questionable, we are at a loss to find arguments by which we may prove the existence of the Supreme Being, or any of his attributes.

That when we speak of Power, as an attribute of any being, GOD himself not excepted, we use words without meaning.

That we can form no idea of power, nor of any being endued with power, *much less* of one endued with infinite power; and that we can never have reason to believe, that any object, or quality of any object exists, of which we cannot form an idea¹.

OF THE MORALITY OF HUMAN ACTIONS.

That every human action is necessary, and could not have been different from what it is.

That moral, intellectual, and corporal virtues, are nearly of the same kind—In other words, that to want honesty, and to want understanding, and to want a leg, are equally the objects of moral disapprobation.

That adultery must be practised, if men would obtain all the advantages of life; that, if generally practised, it would in time cease to be scandalous; and that, if practised secretly and frequently, it would by degrees come to be thought no crime at all.

¹ The poor prodigal *Gentile*, in the parable, was hardly reduced to feed upon such HUSKS as these. How good and how joyful a thing must it be, for one, that has been so reduced, to return to the house of his heavenly Father, where *there is bread enough and to spare—to know the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, whom he hath sent!*

Lastly, as the soul of man, according to Mr. HUME, becomes every moment a different being, the consequence must be, that the crimes committed by him at one time, cannot be imputable to him at another¹.

I believe, Dr. SMITH, the reader is now fully prepared to enter into the spirit of your concluding sentence, which therefore shall be mine.

“I have always considered Mr. HUME, both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idca of A PERFECTLY WISE AND VIRTUOUS MAN, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit.”

¹ “My *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* is of all my writings, historical, philosophical, or literary, incomparably the BEST.”
LIFE, p. 16.

THE END.

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X.

TESTIMONY of the **PROPHETS** to **JESUS** as the **MESSIAH**, by the Rev. **C. W. LE BAS**, M.A. *stitched.*

XI.

TRIAL of the **WITNESSES** of the **RESURRECTION** **JESUS**, by the Right Rev. **THOMAS SHERLOCK**, D.D. Lord Bishop of London. *bd.*

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS
OF THE
REFORMERS AND FATHERS
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

No. V.

ON PRAYER.

“Watch and Pray.”



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PART V.

“WATCH AND PRAY.”

EXTRACT FROM TYNDAL ON THE PARABLE OF THE
UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON.

To watch, is not only to abstain from sleep, but also to be circumspect and to calculate all perils ; as a man should watch a tower or a castle. We must remember that the snares of the devil are infinite and innumerable, and that every moment new temptations arise, and that in all places fresh occasions meet us ; against which we must prepare ourselves, and turn to God, and complain to him, and make our moan, and desire him of his mercy to be our shield, our tower, our castle, and defence from all evil, to put his strength in us, for without him we can do nought, and above all things we must call to mind what promises God hath made, and what he hath sworn that he will do to us for Christ's sake, and with strong faith cleave unto him and desire him of his mercy, and for the love that he hath to Christ, and for his truth's sake, to fulfil his promises. If we thus cleave to God with strong faith and believe his words, then,

6 *Parable of the Unrighteous Mammon.*

as saith Paul, (1 Cor. x.) God is faithful, that he will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, or above our might, that is to say, if we cleave to his promises and not to our own fantasies and imaginations, he will put might and power into us that shall be stronger than all the temptation which he shall suffer to be against us.

PRAYER is a mourning, a longing, and a desire of the man who mourneth and sorroweth in his heart, longing for health. Faith ever prayeth. For after that by faith we are reconciled to God, and have received mercy and forgiveness of God, the spirit longeth and thirsteth for strength to do the will of God, and that God may be honoured, his name hallowed, and his pleasure and will fulfilled. The spirit waiteth and watcheth on the will of God, and ever hath her own fragility and weakness before her eyes; and when she seeth temptation and peril draw nigh, she turneth to God, and to the Testament that God hath made to all that believe and trust in Christ's blood; and desireth God for his mercy, and truth, and for the love he hath to Christ, that he will fulfil his promise, that he will succour, and help, and give us strength, and that he will sanctify his name in us, and fulfil his godly will in us, and that he will not look on our sin and iniquity, but on his mercy, on his truth, and on the love that he oweth to his Son Christ, and for his sake will keep us from temptation, that we be not overcome, and that he deliver us from evil, and from whatsoever moveth us contrary to his godly will.

Moreover, of his own experience the Christian man feeleth other men's need, and no less commendeth to God the infirmities of other than his own, knowing that there is no strength, no help, no succour, but of God only. And as merciful as he feeleth God in his heart to himselfward, so merciful is he to other; and as greatly as he feeleth his own misery, so great compassion hath he on other. His neigh-

bour is no less care to him than himself: he feeleth his neighbour's grief no less than his own. And whensoever he seeth occasion, he cannot but pray for his neighbour as well as for himself: his nature is to seek the honour of God in all men, and to draw (as much as in him is) all men unto God. This is the law of love, which springeth out of Christ's blood into the hearts of all them that have their trust in him. No man needeth to bid a Christian man to pray, if he see his neighbour's need: if he see it not, put him in remembrance only, and then he cannot but do his duty.

PRAYERS, WITH DIRECTIONS FOR PRAYER, FROM THE PRIMER, A BOOK OF PRIVATE PRAYER AUTHORIZED AND SET FORTH BY ORDER OF KING EDWARD VI.—*From the Edition of 1553.*

Directions for Prayer.

First; examine thine own conscience with what kind of temptation or sin thou art most encumbered withal; and pray earnestly to God for remedies thereto; asking of him all things needful both for soul and body; privately for thine own self and thy family, and generally for all the Christian congregation. If any of you lack wisdom (that is, any gift of grace) let him ask of God which giveth to all men indifferently, and casteth no man in the teeth, and it shall be given him.

Secondly; Upon consideration of thine own lack, and the common lack of the congregation, remember that God commandeth thee by prayer to call upon him for remedy, aid, and help, saying: Ask, seek, knock; watch and pray; call upon me (saith God) in the day of tribulation.

Thirdly; Consider that God doth not only command thee to pray, but also promiseth graciously to

hear and grant all thine honest, lawful, and godly requests and petitions; saying, Ask, and ye shall have; knock and it shall be opened unto you; Every one that asketh, hath, &c. Call upon me (saith God) in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.

Fourthly; Thou must stedfastly believe God's promises; and trust undoubtedly, that both he can and will perform them. Ask in faith (saith Saint James) nothing doubting; for why shouldst thou doubt, seeing that the Holy Scripture testifieth of God, that he is faithful, just, and true, in all his words and promises; saying, The Lord is faithful in all his words. He will ever be mindful of his covenant. The truth of the Lord endureth for ever.

Fifthly; Thou must ask of God all thy petitions and requests, for Christ Jesus' sake, and in his blessed and holy name. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me, saith Christ. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it you. Mark, that he saith, "In my name."

Sixthly; Thou must never ask for worldly or corruptible things, pertaining to this transitory life, such as bodily health, wealth, or strength, without employing in thy prayer such conditions as these, If it be thy will, O Lord; if it stand with thine honour and glory; if it be for my soul's health, profit, and advantage; if not, thy will be done and not mine. All these things your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of, before ye ask of him. With this condition prayed Christ, saying, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. With this condition prayed David for his return from his exile¹.

Seventhly; Thou must not appoint any certain time to God for granting thy requests; but utterly commit that to his godly will and pleasure, who knoweth best what time of granting thy requests is

¹ 2 Sam. xv. 23, 26.

most commodious and profitable for thee. Hereof thou hast a goodly example in Judith.

Eighthly ; Ask things pertaining to thy salvation, remission of sin, and life everlasting, without condition. For these hath God certainly promised to all them that with a true, faithful, and obedient heart do come unto him in earnest and continual prayer.

Finally, Thou must in any wise take heed, when thou prayest, that thou be in love and charity with all men ; or else, all these aforesaid things profit nothing at all. For, like as a surgeon cannot heal a wound perfectly, so long as any iron remaineth in it ; even so, prayer cannot profit, so long as the mind is cankered and defiled with guile, fraud, deceit, rancour, hatred, malice, and such other like wretchedness ; for brotherly reconciliation must needs go before prayer. As Christ saith, " If thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thine offering before the altar, and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come, and offer thy gift."

Prepare thyself, therefore, to prayer with the eight aforesaid considerations ; and being adorned and garnished with faith, hope, charity, meekness, soberness, equity, pity, and godliness, go to in Christ's name, and pray unto God with all diligence. And, that thy prayer may be more effectual, let it be joined always with temperate fasting, and charitable alms to thy needy neighbour, according to the godly counsel given to the good man, 'Tobit.' " Prayer is good with fasting and alms."

A Prayer necessary to be said at all times.

O BOUNTIFUL Jesu, O sweet Saviour, O Christ the Son of God, have pity upon me, mercifully hear me, and despise not my prayers. Thou hast created me of nothing ; thou hast redeemed me from the

bondage of sin, death and hell, neither with gold or silver, but with thy most precious body once offered upon the cross, and thine own blood shed once for all, for my ransom: therefore cast me not away, whom thou by thy great wisdom hast made; despise me not whom thou hast redeemed with such a precious treasure: nor let my wickedness destroy that which thy goodness hath builded. Now, whilst I live, O Jesu, have mercy on me; for if I die out of thy favour, it will be too late afterward to call for thy mercy; whilst I have time to repent, look upon me as thou diddest vouchsafe to look upon Peter thine Apostle; that I may bewail my sinful life, and obtain thy favour, and die therein. I acknowledge that if thou shouldest deal with me according to strict justice, I have deserved everlasting death. Therefore I appeal to thy high throne of mercy, trusting to obtain God's favour, not for my merits, but for thy merits, O Jesu, who hast given thyself an acceptable sacrifice to thy Father; to appease his wrath, and to bring all sinners truly repenting, and amending their evil life, into his favour again. Accept me, O Lord, among the number of them that shall be saved; forgive my sins; give me grace to lead a godly and innocent life; grant me thy heavenly wisdom, inspire my heart with faith, hope, and charity; give me grace to be humble in prosperity, patient in adversity, obedient unto my rulers, faithful unto them that trust me, dealing truly with all men; to live chastely, to abhor all uncleanness; to do good, after my power unto all men; to hurt no man; that thy name may be glorified in me, during this present life, and that I afterward may obtain everlasting life, through thy mercy and the merits of thy passion. Amen.

A Prayer in Adversity.

ALMIGHTY God, which for mine ingratitude and sinful life hast worthily punished me with much

affliction and adversity, I most humbly beseech thee, to give me grace utterly to detest and abhor my former wretched and sinful life; and to study daily for the amendment of the same; and to be fully persuaded that this affliction hath not chanced to me by casualty or misfortune, but by thy foreknowledge, counsel, permission, and determinate pleasure; and that thou beatest me with this thy rod of fatherly correction, not to the intent to cast me clean out of thy favour; but because thou wouldest thereby reclaim me to unfeigned repentance for my former life; to be more circumspect of godly life hereafter; to exercise my faith in thy godly promises; to try me whether I will be patient and constant in adversity; to make me abhor the vain pleasures of this life; and, finally, with fervent and continual desire to long for the life everlasting. Wherefore, I most heartily pray thee, vouchsafe to increase and strengthen my faith, hope, charity, and meekness, and that I may, without murmur or grudge, patiently bear this thy fatherly chastisement; especially grant me, that I may daily increase more and more in fervent love towards thee: for thy holy word saith, that to them that love God, all things shall happen for the best; whether it be prosperity or adversity, health or sickness, life or death. In consideration whereof, I submit me wholly to thee; and fully surrender and resign all my will to thy most godly will and pleasure; which I nothing doubt shall end this my affliction so, as shall be meetest and most agreeable to thy honour and glory, and to my most perfect wealth and everlasting salvation; through Jesus Christ our only Saviour, Redeemer, Advocate, and Mediator. Amen.

For the gift of the Holy Ghost.

So frail is our nature; so vile is our flesh; so sinful is our heart; so corrupt are our affections; so wicked are all our thoughts, even from our childhood up-

wards, that of ourselves we can neither think, speak, or do any thing that is praiseworthy in thy sight, O Heavenly Father; yea, except thou dost assist us with thy merciful goodness, all things are so far out of frame in us, that we see nothing present in ourselves but thy heavy displeasure and eternal condemnation. Vouchsafe, therefore, O loving Father, to send thy holy Spirit unto us; which may make us new creatures; put away from us all fleshly lusts; fill our hearts with new affections, and spiritual motions; and so altogether renew us both in body and soul, through his godly inspiration, that we may die unto the old Adam, and live unto thee in newness of life, serving thee our Lord God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Amen.

For the true knowledge of ourselves.

It is written in thy holy Gospel, most loving Saviour, that thou camest into this world not to call the righteous, that is, such as justify themselves, but sinners unto repentance. Suffer me not, therefore, O Lord, to be in the number of those, which boasting their own righteousness, their own works and merits, despise that righteousness which cometh by faith; which alone is allowable before thee. Give me grace to acknowledge mine own self as I am, even the son of wrath by nature, a wretched sinner, and an unprofitable servant; and wholly to depend on thy merciful goodness with a strong and unshaken faith; that in this world, thou mayest continually call me unto true repentance, seeing I continually sin; and, in the world to come, bring me unto everlasting glory. Amen.

For a pure and clean heart.

THE heart of man naturally is corrupt; insomuch that no man is able to say, my heart is clean, and I

am clear from sin. Remove from me, therefore, O heavenly Father, my corrupt, sinful, stony, stubborn, and unfaithful heart. Create in me a clean heart, free from all noisome and ungodly thoughts. Breathe into my heart by thy holy Spirit, godly and spiritual motions; that out of the good treasure of the heart, I may bring forth good things, unto the praise and glory of thy name. Amen.

For a quiet conscience.

THE wicked are like a raging sea, which is never in quiet: neither is there any peace to the ungodly; but such as love thy law, O Lord, they have plenty of peace; they have quiet minds, and contented consciences, which is the greatest treasure under the sun; given of thee to so many as seek it at thy hand with true faith and continual prayer. Give me, O Lord, that joyful jewel, even a quiet mind and a contented conscience; that I being free from the malicious accusations of Satan, from the crafty persuasions of the world, from the subtle enticements of the flesh, from the heavy curse of the law, and being fully persuaded of thy merciful goodness toward me, through faith in thy Son Jesus Christ, may quietly serve thee both bodily and ghostly, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of my life. Amen.

For Faith.

FORASMUCH as nothing pleaseth thee that is done without faith, appear it before the blind world never so beautiful and commendable, I most humbly desire thee, O Father, for Christ's sake, to breathe into my heart by thy holy Spirit, this most precious and singular gift of faith, which worketh by love; and by which also we are justified, and received into thy favour; that I truly believing in thee, and being fully persuaded of the truth of thy holy word, may

be made thy son, and inheritor of everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Charity.

THY cognizance and badge whereby thy disciples are known, O Lord and Saviour Jesu Christ, is charity or love, which cometh out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. I pray thee, therefore, give me this Christian love and perfect charity, that I may love thee my Lord God with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; doing always of very love that only which is pleasant in thy sight. Again, that I may love my neighbour and Christian brother as myself; wishing as well to him as to myself; and ready, at all times, to do for him whatsoever lieth in my power, that when we shall all stand before thy dreadful judging place, I, being known by thy badge, may be numbered among thy disciples, and so, through thy mercy, receive the reward of eternal glory. Amen.

A Thanksgiving unto God for all his Benefits.

THY benefits toward me, O most loving Father, are so great and infinite, whether I have respect unto my body or unto my soul, that I find not in myself how to recompence any part of thine unspeakable goodness towards me. But thou which needest none of my goods, knowing our poverty, yea, our nothing, requirest of us for a recompence of thy kindness, only the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; O Lord and merciful Father, what worthy thanks am I, poor and wretched sinner, able to give thee? Notwithstanding, trusting in thy mercy and favourable kindness, I offer unto thee, in the name of Christ, the sacrifice of praise, ever thanking thee most heartily for all thy benefits which thou hast bestowed upon me, thy most un-

profitable servant, from the beginning of my life unto this present hour; most humbly beseeching thee to continue thy loving-kindness towards me; and to give me grace so to walk, worthy of this thy fatherly goodness, that when thou shalt call me out of this careful life, I may enjoy that thy most singular and last benefit, which is everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

A Prayer for the King.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, King of kings, and Lord of lords, which by thy divine ordinance hast appointed temporal rulers, to govern thy people according to equity and justice, and to live among them as a loving father among his own children, for the advancement of the good, and punishment of the evil, we most humbly beseech thee favourably to behold our king and governor, and to breathe into his heart, through thy Holy Spirit, the wisdom that is ever about the throne of thy Majesty, whereby he may be moved to love, fear, and serve thee, and unfeignedly to advance thy holy and pure religion among us his subjects, unto the example of other foreign nations. O, Lord, defend him from his enemies, send him a long and prosperous life among us, and give him grace, not only in his own person, godly and justly to rule, but also to appoint such magistrates under him as may be affected in like manner towards thy holy word, and also towards the commonwealth; that we, his subjects, living under his dominion in all godliness, peace, and wealth¹, may pass the time of this our short pilgrimage in thy fear and service, unto the glory of thy blessed name, which alone is worthy of all honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

For the King's Council.

MAY it please thee, O Lord, which hast the hearts of all rulers in thy hands; and directest their councils according to thy good pleasure, mercifully to assist all which are of the king's most honourable council; and to give them thy Holy Spirit to be their ruler, and governor, that in all their assemblies, they may ever set before their eyes thy most high and princely Majesty, the fear of thy name, the accomplishment of thy commandment, and always remember, that they are servants appointed for the wealth and commodity of the king and his people; executing true judgment indifferently towards all the king's subjects, through justice and mercy, being void of all covetousness, that whatsoever they attempt privately or openly, may turn to the glory of thy blessed name, to the setting forth of thy holy word, to the advancement of the king's honour, to the profit of the commonwealth, to the destruction of vice, and to the commendation of virtue. Give them grace, O most merciful Father, so to be of one mind in all godly and virtuous things, that they ruling righteously, and we living obediently, may altogether, with quiet hearts and free consciences, praise and magnify thee, our Lord God, for ever and ever. Amen.

For Bishops, Spiritual Pastors, and Ministers of God's Word.

O LORD, Jesu Christ, most true Pastor and Shepherd of our souls, we most humbly beseech thee, mercifully to behold thy flock, whom thou hast purchased with thy most precious blood, and to send them such shepherds as both can and will diligently seek up the lost sheep, lovingly lay them on their shoulders, and faithfully bring them home again to the sheep-fold.

Vouchsafe ever to continue in thy Church good bishops, learned preachers, faithful teachers, godly ministers, and diligent shepherds, even such as have a fervent and unfeigned zeal towards the setting forth of thy glory, and the health of thy people. Endue them with thy Holy Spirit, that they may be faithful, wise, and discreet servants, giving thy household meat in due season. Give them that thy wisdom, which no man is able to resist, wherewith also they may be both able to exhort with wholesome doctrine, and also to convince and overcome them that speak against it.

Finally, grant, we pray thee, most merciful Saviour, that, in all things, they may so behave themselves, according to thy blessed will and commandment, that when thou, the most high Bishop and chief Shepherd, shalt appear, they may receive the incorruptible crown of glory. Amen.

PRAYERS, AND MEDITATIONS ON PRAYER, BY JOHN
BRADFORD¹. 1554.

Instructions to be observed concerning Prayer.

THERE are nine things that pertain to the knowledge of true prayer:—

To know—1, what prayer is. 2, How many sorts of prayer there are. 3, The necessity of prayer. 4, To Whom we ought to pray. 5, By Whom we must pray. 6, Where to pray. 7, What to pray. 8, The excellency of prayer. 9, What we must do, that our prayers may be heard.

1. What prayer is.

Prayer is a simple, unfeigned, humble, and ardent opening of the heart before God; wherein we either ask things needful, or give thanks for benefits re-

¹ John Bradford, Prebendary of St. Paul's, suffered martyrdom by fire, in Smithfield, July 1st, 1555.

ceived. Paul (1 Tim. ii.) calls it by four sundry names in one sentence, namely, prayer, supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving; whereof the first is, for the avoiding and preventing of evil; the second is an earnest and fervent calling upon God for any thing; the third is an intercession for others; the fourth is a praising of God for things received.

2. There are two manner of ways how we should pray.

First, publicly, and that is called common prayer; second, privately, as when men pray alone, and that is called private prayer; and how both these two are allowed before God, the Scripture bears testimony by the example of all the holy men and women before and after Christ.

3. Of the necessity of prayer.

There are four things that provoke us to pray: first, the commandment of God; secondly, sin in us, which drives us, from necessity, to God for succour, life, and mercy; thirdly, our weak nature being unable to do any good; fourthly, the subtilty of the enemy who privily lurketh in the inward parts, waiting to overthrow us even in those things we think are best done.

4. To Whom we ought to pray.

Three things pertain to Him that must be prayed unto: first, that he have such ears as may hear all the world at once; secondly, that he be in all places at once; thirdly, that he have such power that he may be able to help, and such mercy that he will deliver.

5. By Whom we should pray.

Christ is the only way whereby we have free access unto the Father, and for whose sake our prayers are accepted.

6. Where to pray.

As touching the place where we should pray, seeing all places are one, there is none forbidden; only the common prayer must be used in what place soever the congregation of Christ assembles.

7. What to pray. This is according to the necessity of every man; and forasmuch as we need both spiritual and corporeal things, we may boldly ask them both: for as to ask spiritual gifts, is profitable and commanded, so to ask corporeal, is necessary and allowed.

8. Of the excellency of prayer.

The worthiness of prayer consists in two things; in the dignity of the commander, who is God, the fountain of all goodness, who commandeth only good things; and in the effect that follows it, which is the obtaining of whatsoever we desire faithfully, according to the will of God.

9. What to do that we may be heard.

First, we must put off our own righteousness, pride, and estimation of ourselves, and put on Christ with his righteousness; secondly, an earnest faith and fervent love, with the putting off all rancour, malice, and envy, is required; finally, true repentance knitteth up the knot, for in it are contained all the virtues aforenamed.

A Meditation concerning Prayer, with a brief Paraphrase upon the Petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

THE mind of man has such large room to receive good things, that nothing can fully fill it but God alone, whom thy mind fully possesses, when it fully knows him, fully loves him, and in all things is framed after his will. They therefore, Lord God, that are thy children, and have tasted somewhat of thy goodness, do perpetually pray until they come thereto; and since they love thee above all things, it wonderfully wounds them that other men do not love thee and seek for thee, with them. Whereof it comes to pass, that they are inflamed with continual prayers and desires, that thy kingdom might come everywhere, and thy goodness might be both known, and in life set forth, by every man.

And because there are innumerable things, which as well in themselves as in others are against thy glory, they are kindled with continual prayer and desire, sighing unspeakably in thy sight for the increase of thy Spirit. And sometimes, when they see thy glory more put back than it was wont to be, either in themselves or in any others, then are they much more disquieted and vexed. But because they know that thou dost rule all things after thy good will, and that none other can help them in their need, they oftentimes go aside, all business laid apart, and give themselves to godly cogitations and talk with thee, complaining to thee as to their Father, of those things that grieve them, begging thereto, and that most earnestly, thy help, not only for themselves, but also for others, especially for those whom especially they embrace in thee. And they often do repeat and remember thy gracious benefits both to others and to themselves also; wherethrough they are provoked to render to thee hearty thanks, thereby being inflamed, assuredly to hope well of thy good will towards them, and patiently to bear all evils; also to study and labour to mortify the affections of the flesh, and to order all their whole life to the service of their brethren and the setting forth of thy glory.

This they know is that prayer which thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord commanded to be made to thee in the chamber, the door being shut. (Matt. vi.) In this kind of prayer he himself watched often, even all the whole night. Herein was Paul frequent, as all thy saints are. This kind of prayer is the true lifting up of the mind unto thee; this standeth in the affections, in the heart, not in words and in the mouth. As thy children are endued with thy Spirit, so they frequently thus commune with thee—the more thy Spirit is in them, the more are they in communion with thee. Oh, give me plentifully thy Spirit, which thou hast promised to pour out upon all flesh, that thus I with thy saints may commune with thee night and day,

for thy only beloved Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Moreover, thy saints, to provoke themselves to this kind of prayer, use first *their necessity*, which they consider in three sorts; inwardly, concerning their souls; outwardly, concerning their bodies; and finally concerning their good name: whereto they add the necessities of those who are committed to them, the necessities of thy church, and of the common weal.

Secondly, they use *thy commandments*, which require them under pain of sin, to pray to thee in all their need.

Thirdly, they use *the consideration of thy goodness*, who art naturally merciful to young ravens calling upon thee, much more then to them for whom ravens and all things else were made, for whom thou hast not spared thy dear Son, but given him up for us all. (Rom. viii.)

Fourthly, they use *thy most sweet and free promises*, made to hear and help all them that call upon thee in Christ's name.

Fifthly, they use *examples*, how that thou, who art the God of all, and rich unto all them that call upon thee in Christ's name, hast heard and helped others calling upon thee.

Sixthly, they use *the benefits given them before they asked*; thereby not only provoking them to ask more, but also certifying their faith, that if thou wast so good as to grant them many things unasked, now thou wilt not deny them any thing they ask to thy glory and their weal.

Last of all, they use *the reading and meditating upon psalms and other good prayers*, because they know that thereby peculiarly, besides the other Scriptures, there is no small help; as may appear by Paul, (Eph. v., Col. iii.,) where he willett the congregation to use psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, but so that in the heart we should sing and say them;—not that thy children do not use their tongues and words in praying to thee, for they do use their tongues, speech,

and words, to stir up their inward desire and fervency of the mind; full well knowing that else it were a plain mocking of thee, to pray with lips and tongue only. Oh! that now I might feel thy Spirit so to affect me, that both with heart and mouth I might heartily and in faith pray unto thee.

Now concerning the things that are to be prayed for, thy children know that the prayer taught by thy Son, most lively and plainly contains the same; and therefore they often use it. First, asking of thee, their heavenly Father, through Christ, that thy name might every where be had in holiness and praise; then, secondly, that thy kingdom by regeneration and the ministry of the gospel might come. And, thirdly, that willingly, perfectly, and perpetually, they might study to do, yea, to do indeed thy will, with thy holy and heavenly angels and spirits. These things they seek and pray for; namely, thy kingdom and thy righteousness before any worldly benefit. After which petitions, because all things, yea, even the benefits of this present life, come from thee, they godly desire the same under the name of daily bread; being instructed of thy wisdom, that after spiritual benefits to ask for corporeal, is not unseemly to thy children, who know that both spiritual and corporeal come from thy mercy. In the other petitions, they begin with praying for forgiveness of sins, which, if their hearts were not so broken, that they could forgive all things to all men for their own part, were presumptuously prayed for. They add their profession, that is, charity, whereby they profess that they have forgiven all offences done to them; howbeit, because it is not enough to have pardon of that which is past, except they are preserved from new offences, they pray thee not to lead them into temptation, by permitting them to follow the perverse suggestions of Satan; but rather to deliver them from his importunity and power; by evil, they understanding that Satan the author of all evil is meant. O that thou wouldest endue me and all thy children with thy

Spirit of grace and prayer, so to make this prayer always whensoever I do pray.

As for outward evils, so long as they do not, as it were, enforce thy people to sin, Christian profession accounts them among thy benefits, and thy Son has not taught thy church to pray for the taking away of them in this prayer; for herein he has comprehended only those things for which all Christians, generally and particularly, may in faith pray at all times. It often comes to pass, that exterior evils, because they are not evils indeed, that is, because they are not against God's grace in us, therefore they cannot in faith be prayed against to be taken away; for thy children that have faith always prefer thy judgment before their own; which judgment when they know, by that which happens to them, they submit themselves thereto wholly—although thy Spirit make his unspeakable groanings to help their infirmities by prayer, not to have them taken away, but that they might have strength and patience to bear them accordingly. Which burden, if it be too heavy in the better sense and feeling thereof, they in their prayers complain somewhat of, rather than pray to have it taken away. As our Saviour did in the garden, when he added to his complaint "Not my will, but thy will be done;" so do thy people in all their complaints add, "Not as we will, but as thou wilt," for they are taught by thy Spirit not to pray for the taking away of corporeal evils, either from themselves or from others, unless they by the same Spirit can certainly perceive that the same makes to thy glory; as did thy apostles and servants, when absolutely and without condition they asked health or miracle for any, when they healed or raised the dead by prayer: for they know nothing can be better, than when it is according to thy will. Oh! that I might always know thy will in all things, and for ever apply myself thereto. Thy will is always best, and the thing whereto thy children frame all their desires. Oh! good Father, for thy mercy's sake, give me the true love of mankind; but yet so

that I may love man for thee and in thee, and always prefer thy glory above all things, through Christ our Lord.

Now though thy children know, that thy will cannot but be done, and that nothing can be done but what thou of thine own will hast determined to do, although no man should desire the same, yet are they earnest and frequent in prayer; first, to render obedience to thee, who requirest prayer as a spiritual service to thee; secondly, because thou hast ordained prayer to be as an instrument and mean, by which thou workest things with thee already decreed and determined. Thy children use prayer to offer to thee their service, if it shall please thee to use the same. As they eat and drink, which is a mean ordained of thee, for the preservation of their life, not looking thereby to lengthen their days above their bounds, which already thou hast appointed; but as it becomes them to use thy means which thou hast ordained to serve thy providence, so they (herein as men not curious to know thy providence further than thou revealest it) use prayer as a mean by which thou art accustomed to work many of thy children's desires, that according to thy good will thou mayest use the same. They do not think there is a mutability in thee, for thou art God, and art not changed—with thee there is no variableness; and therefore they pray, not as men who would have thy determinations and ordinances to be altered, which are ordained in the fullest wisdom and mercy, but rather that they might submit their wills to thine, and make them more able to bear thy will and pleasure. They know that thou hast promised to help them who call upon thee; wherefore they doubt not, but that thou wilt do so, and therefore pray accordingly. They love thee heartily, and therefore they cannot but desire much to talk with thee, that is to pray. Thy children use prayer as a means, by which they see plainly thy power, thy presence, thy providence, mercy, and goodness towards them, in granting their petitions, and by prayer they are con-

firmed of them all. Yea, thy children use prayer to admonish them that all things are in thy hands. In prayer they are as it were of thee put in mind of those things which they have done against thee their good Lord. By reason whereof repentance ensues, and they conceive a purpose to live more purely ever afterwards, and more heartily to apply themselves to all innocency and goodness. Who now, considering that so many great advantages come by reason of prayer, would marvel why thy children are much in prayer, and in labouring to provoke others thereunto?

For as no one that is a suitor to any other, will use any thing which might offend or hinder his suit, so no man that uses prayer will flatter himself in any thing that should displease thee, to whom by prayer he makes suit whensoever he prayeth; so that nothing is a greater provocation to all kinds of godliness than prayer is. And therefore not without cause we may see thine apostles and servants laboured so diligently, and desired that others might use prayers for themselves and others. As concerning outward things, which thy children pray for, although they know thy will and decree is not variable, and thy purpose must needs come to pass, yet do they receive by their prayer no small advantage. For either they obtain their requests, or not; if they do obtain them, then they prove by experience that thou doest the will of them that fear thee, and so they are more kindled to love and serve thee. And indeed for this purpose thou art wont, when thou wilt do good to any, to stir up their minds to desire the same good of thee, to the end that both thou and thy gifts may be so much more magnified, and set by of them, by how much they have been earnest suitors and petitioners for the same: for how can it but inflame them with love towards thee, to perceive and feel thee so to care for them, hear them, and love them? If they do not obtain what they pray for, yet undoubtedly they receive great comfort to see, that the evils which press them, and whereof they complain still, do not oppress and overcome them.

and therefore they receive strength to bear the same the better. O good Father! help me that I may heartily love thee, complain to thee in all my needs, and always by prayer pour out my heart before thee. Amen.

A CONFESSION OF SINS, AND PRAYER FOR THE MITIGATION OF GOD'S WRATH AND PUNISHMENT FOR THE SAME.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, King of all kings, and Governor of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners, and to be merciful unto them that truly repent; we confess that thou dost most justly punish us, for we have grievously sinned against thee. And we acknowledge, that in punishing us thou declarest thyself to be our most merciful Father, as well because thou dost not punish us in any thing as we have deserved, as also because, by punishing us thou dost call us and draw us to increase in repentance, in faith, in prayer, in contemning of the world, and in hearty desires for everlasting life, and thy blessed presence; grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, thankfully to acknowledge thy great mercy, who hast thus favourably dealt with us, in punishing us, not to our confusion, but to our amendment. And seeing thou hast sworn that thou wilt not the death of a sinner, but that he turn and live, have mercy upon us, and turn us unto thee for thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ's sake, whom thou wouldest to be sacrifice for our sins, thereby declaring thy great and unspeakable anger against sin, and thine infinite mercy towards us sinful wretches.

And forasmuch as the dulness of our hearts, blindness, and corruption are such, that we are not able to rise up unto thee by faithful and hearty prayer, according to our great necessity, without singular grace and assistance; grant unto us,

gracious Lord, thy holy and sanctifying Spirit to work in us this good work with a pure and clean mind, with a humble and lowly heart, with grace to weigh and consider the need and greatness of that which we desire, and with an assured faith and trust that thou wilt grant us our requests; because thou art good and gracious even to young ravens calling upon thee, much more then to us for whom thou hast made all things, yea, and hast not spared thine own dear Son; because thou hast commanded us to call upon thee; because thy throne whereunto we come is a throne of grace and mercy; because thou hast given us a mediator, Christ, to bring us unto thee, being the way by whom we come, being the door by whom we enter, and hope that our poor petitions shall not be in vain, through and for his name's sake.

We beseech thee, therefore, of thy rich mercy, wherein thou art plentiful to all them that call upon thee, to forgive us our sins, namely, our unthankfulness, unbelief, self-love, neglect of thy word, self-confidence, hypocrisy, contempt of thy long suffering, omission of prayer, doubting of thy power, presence, mercy, and good will towards us, insensibleness of thy grace, impatience. And to this thy benefit of correcting us, add these thy gracious gifts, repentance, faith, the spirit of prayer, the contempt of this world, and hearty desires of everlasting life. Endue us with thy Holy Spirit, according to thy covenant and mercy, as well to assure us of pardon, and that thou dost accept us into thy favour as thy dear children in Christ, and for his sake, as to write thy law in our hearts, and so to work in us, that we may now begin, and go forwards in believing, loving, fearing, obeying, praying, hoping, and serving thee as thou dost require most fatherly and most justly of us, accepting us as perfect, through Christ.

And moreover, when it shall be thy good pleasure, and most to thy glory, deliver us, we beseech thee,

out of the hands of thine adversaries, by such means, be it death or life, as may most make to our comfort in Christ. In the mean season, and for ever, save us and govern us with thy Holy Spirit, and his eternal consolation.

Grant that we, and all thine afflicted children, may be armed with thy defence, weaponed with thy wisdom, and guided with thy grace and Holy Spirit, to be preserved for ever from all giving of offence to thy people, and from all perils, to glorify thee, who art the only giver of all victory, through the merits of thy only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for the Remission of Sins.

O! Lord God and heavenly Father, what shall I say that feel all things to be in a manner with me as with the wicked! Blind is my mind, crooked is my will, and perverse concupiscence is in me. Oh! how faint is faith in me! how little love is there to thee or thy people, how great is self-love, how hard is my heart. By reason whereof I am moved to doubt of thy goodness towards me, whether thou art my Father or not, and whether I am thy child or not. Indeed justly might I doubt it, if the having of these were the causes and not rather the fruits of being thy children. The cause why thou art my Father, is, thy mercy, goodness, grace, and truth in Christ Jesus, which cannot but remain for ever. In respect whereof thou hast borne me this good will, to accept me into the number of thy children, that I might be holy, faithful, obedient, innocent. And therefore thou wouldest not only make me a creature after thy image, but also thou wouldest that I should be born of Christian parents, brought into thy Church by baptism, and called by the ministry of thy word into thy kingdom, besides the innumerable other benefits always

hitherto poured upon me. All this thou hast done of thy good will which thou of thine own mercy bearest to me in Christ and for Christ before the world was made; which thou requirest straitly that I should believe without doubting, so that in all my needs I should come unto thee as a Father, and make my moan without mistrust of being heard, in thy good time, as most shall make to my comfort. Lo! therefore to thee, dear Father, I come through thy Son our Lord, our Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ, who sitteth on thy right hand, making intercession for me, and I pray thee of thy great goodness and mercy in Christ, to be merciful unto me, that I may feel indeed thy sweet mercy, as thy child. The time, O dear Father, I appoint not; but I pray thee that I may with hope still expect and look for thy help. Remember, even for thine own truth and mercy's sake, this promise and everlasting covenant, which in thy good time I pray thee to write in my heart, that I may "know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" that I may love thee with all my heart for ever; that I may love thy people for thy sake; that I may be holy in thy sight through Christ; that I may always not only strive against sin, but also overcome the same, daily more and more, as thy children do; above all things desiring the hallowing of thy name, the coming of thy kingdom, the doing of thy will here on earth as it is in heaven, &c. through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, Mediator, and Advocate. Amen.

A Prayer for the obtaining of faith.

O MERCIFUL God and dear Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom as thou art well pleased, so hast thou commanded us to hear him. Forasmuch as he often biddeth us to ask of thee,

and promises that thou wilt hear us, and grant us that which in his name we shall ask of thee; O! gracious Father, I am bold to beg of thy mercy, through thy Son Jesus Christ, one spark of true faith, and certain persuasion of thy goodness and love towards me in Christ, wherethrough I, being assured of the pardon of all my sins, by the mercies of Christ thy Son, may be thankful to thee, love thee, and serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life. Amen.

DAILY MEDITATIONS.

When you awake out of your sleep, Pray thus:

O MOST merciful God, the Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whom none doth know but by thy gift, grant that to the manifold great benefits of thy goodness given to me, this, which of all other is the greatest, may be added; that like as thou hast awakened my body from sleep, so thou wouldest thoroughly awake, yea, deliver my soul from the sleep of sin and the darkness of this world, and that which now is awakened out of sleep, be pleased, after death, to restore to life, for that is but sleep to thee, which is death to us. O God, I most heartily beseech and humbly pray thy goodness to make my body such a companion, or rather such a minister of godliness to my soul, in this present life, that in the life to come it may partake therewith everlasting happiness by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Subjects for meditation.—Here call to mind the great joy and blessedness of the everlasting resurrection; also remember to muse upon that most clear light and bright morning, when all shall be full of joy.

So soon as you behold the daylight, Pray :

O Lord, thou greatest and most true Light, whence this light of the day and of the sun doth spring! O Light, which dost lighten every man that cometh into this world! O Light, which knowest no night nor evening, but art always a mid-day, most clear and fair, without whom all is most dark darkness—by whom all are most resplendent! O thou Wisdom of the eternal Father of mercies! enlighten my mind, that I may only see those things that please thee, and may be blinded to all other things. Grant that I may walk in thy ways, and that nothing else may be light and pleasant unto me. Lighten mine eyes, O Lord! that I sleep not in death, lest mine enemies say, “I have prevailed against him.”

Subjects for meditation.—Muse a little how much the light and eye of the mind and soul are better than those of the body; also that we should care more for the soul's seeing well, than for the body. Think that beasts have bodily eyes, and therewith see; but men have eyes of the mind, and therewith should see.

When you arise, Pray:

Our first father flung himself down from a most excellent, high, and honourable estate, into the mire of misery, and deep sea of shame and mischief; but, O Christ, thou, putting forth thine hand, didst raise him up; even so we, except we be lifted up by thee, shall lie still for ever. O good Lord, grant that as thou dost mercifully now raise up this my body and burden, even so I beseech thee raise up my mind and heart to the light of the true knowledge of the love of thee, that my conversation may be in heaven, where thou art.

Subjects for meditation. — Think how fearful Adam's fall was, by reason of sin, and so the fall of every one of us from the height of God's grace; again, think upon the great benefit of Christ, by whose help we do daily arise from our failings.

When you are made ready to begin the day, Pray:

O God and merciful Father, thou knowest and hast taught us somewhat to know, that the weakness of man is much, and that without thy grace and virtue he cannot do or think any good thing; have mercy upon me, I humbly beseech thee, who am thy most unworthy and most weak child. Oh! be gracious and tender towards me, enlighten me, that I may with pleasure look only upon good things; exhort me, that I may covet them; carefully lead me, that I may follow, and at length attain them. I, distrusting myself altogether, commend and offer myself wholly, soul, body, life, into thy hands. Thy loving Spirit lead me forth unto the land of righteousness.

Thoughts proper to begin the day with.

Think first that a man consists of a soul and a body, and that the soul is from heaven, firm and immortal; but the body is of the earth, earthly, frail, and mortal. Again, think that by reason of sin, wherein you are conceived and born, the parts of the soul that understand and desire are so corrupt, that without especial grace to both soul and body, you can neither know nor love any good thing in God's sight, much less do good. Yet, notwithstanding, think, that you are regenerate by Christ's resurrection, whereof your baptism requireth faith; and therefore that you have both body and soul in some degree reformed both to know and love, and therefore to do some good in the sight of God through Christ, for

whose sake our poor doings are accepted for good ; the evil and infirmity cleaving thereto not being imputed through faith. Think that by faith you receive more and more the Spirit of sanctification, through the use of God's word and sacraments, and earnest prayer, to illumine and enlighten your mind's understanding, judgment, and reason, and to bow, form, frame and inflame your affections with love and power to that which is good ; and therefore use the means aforesaid accordingly. Think that, by this Spirit, you are through faith united to Christ as a lively member, and so to God, and, as it were, made one with him, and by love which springeth out of this faith you are made one also with all that are of God. And so you have fellowship with God, and all good men that ever were or shall be, in all the good that God and all his saints have or shall have. Think that as, by faith and love through the Spirit, you are now entered into this communion, the blessedness whereof no tongue can express, so after this life you shall, first in soul, and in the last day in body also, enjoy for ever the same society most perfectly, which now is only begun in you. Think then of your negligence, that cares so little for this your happy estate. Think upon your ingratitude to God for making you, redeeming you, calling you, and so lovingly adopting you. Think upon your foolishness in fancying so much earthly and bodily pleasures. Think upon your deafness and blindness, who hear not God nor see him, though he calls you so diligently by his works, words, and sacraments. Think upon your frowardness, who will not be led of God and his Spirit. Think upon your forgetfulness and inconsideration of your high estate, how your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, how your members are the members of Christ, how the whole world and all things are your own. (1 Cor. iii. vi.) And therefore say unto your soul, O soul ! arise, follow God, contemn this world, purpose well,

and pursue it, long for thy Lord's coming, be ready and watch that he come not upon you unawares, And forasmuch as you must live to God's pleasure, consider the vocation and state of your life whereto God hath called you, and pray to God for grace, knowledge, and ability to take the most profitable things in hand; to begin well, to go on better, and, best of all, to end the same to God's glory, and the profit of your brethren; and think that time lost wherein you speak or do not, or at the least think not, something to God's glory and your brethren's advantage.

When you go forth out of doors, Pray:

Now must I walk among the snares of death, which are stretched out by Satan and his mischievous ministers in the world, carrying with me a friend to them both, and a foe to myself, even this body of sin and sinful flesh. O Christ, the Captain of our salvation, lead me and guide me, I beseech thee; defend me from the plagues and subtilties whereby I am endangered. Grant that I may take all things that happen as I should do; only upon thee set thou mine eyes, that I may so go on forwards in thy ways, that by nothing I may be hindered, but may rather be forwarded, and may refer all things to thee accordingly.

Subjects for meditation.—As in going abroad, you look that your apparel is seemly in the sight of men, so examine how seemly you appear in the sight of God.

When you are going any journey, Pray:

This our life is a pilgrimage. From the Lord we came, and to the Lord we make our journey; howbeit we pass through painful and perilous ways. O Christ! who art a most true Pilot and Guide, and thereto most expert, faithful, and friendly, do thou put out thine hand, open mine eyes, make thy paths

known unto me. Thou art the way, lead us to the Father by thyself, that we all may be one with him, as thou and he together are one. Show me thy way that I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto thee. (Psalm cxliii.)

Or Pray thus:

Merciful Father, thou art wont to send to thy servants and men of simple hearts, thine angels to be their keepers, and, as it were, guides: as elder brethren, to watch over thy weak children; so didst thou to Jacob, to Abraham's servant, to Joshua, and others. O good God! though we are much unlike unto them, so many are our sins, yet for thine own goodness' sake, send thine holy angels, to pitch their tents about us, from Satan and his slaves to hide and defend, to carry us in their hands, that we come not into further danger than thou throughout wilt deliver us from for thine own sake. Satan sleepeth not, but seeketh always to destroy us.

Subjects for meditation. — Think how we are strangers from our country, from our home, from our original; I mean from God. Again, think upon our madness, that linger and loiter so willingly in this our journey and pilgrimage; also how foolish we are to fancy things which we cannot carry with us, and to condemn conscience, which will always be a companion to us, to our joy if it is good, but to our shame and sorrow if it is evil and corrupt. Finally, how unnatural we are, that so little desire to be at our home, to be with our only Father, and Master, our fellows, and our friends.

When you are about to receive your meat, Pray:

This is a wonderful mystery of thy work. O Maker and Governor of the world, that thou dost sustain the lives of men and beasts with these meats! Surely

this power is neither in the bread nor food, but in thy will and word, by which word all things live and have their being. All things look up to thee, and thou givest them meat in due season; thou openest thine hand, and fillest with thy blessing every living thing: these, doubtless, are wonderful works of thine almightiness. I therefore heartily pray thee, O most liberal Lord and faithful Father, that as thou by meat through thy word dost minister life to these our bodies, even so by the same word with thy grace do thou quicken our souls; that both in soul and body we may please thee; till this our mortal body shall put on immortality, and we shall need no more any other food, but thee only, who then wilt be all in all. Taste, and see how good the Lord is; bless the Lord, O my soul, who feedeth and filleth thy mouth with good things.

Subjects for meditation.—Think a little how great God's power is, that made us; also think how great his wisdom is to preserve us; but most of all, think how many things are given for our use, how wonderful it is to give us life, but most of all, to propagate to immortality the life of the soul by his beck alone. Last of all, think that God, by his providence for thy body, would have thee confirm thy faith respecting God's providence for thy soul.

In the meal-time, Pray:

O most liberal Distributor of thy gifts, who givest us all kinds of good things to use, thou, being pure, givest pure things; grant to me thy grace, that I misuse not these thy gracious gifts, given to our use and profit. Let us not set our hearts on these things, but rather let us love Thee, because thou givest them, and because they are necessary for us for a season, till we come unto thee. Grant us to be conversant among thy gifts soberly, purely, temperately, honestly, because thou art such: so shall not we turn

to the poison of our souls, that which thou hast given for the medicine of our bodies, but using thy benefits thankfully, we shall find them profitable both to soul and body.

Subjects for meditation.—Think that the meats and drinks set before you, are given to you to use, and not to abuse; think they are given to profit and not to hurt you; think that they are not given to you alone, but unto others also, by you. In eating and drinking, think that you do but feed the worms. Remember the poor prisoners, the sick, &c., as though you were in their case. Think upon the food of your soul, Christ's body broken, and his blood shed. Desire the meat that lasteth for ever, (John vi.) work for it; Christ's meat was to do his Father's will. (John iv.)

After your meat, Pray thus :

By corporeal meats thou dost sustain our corporeal daily life, which otherwise is ready to perish, which surely is a great work, but yet this is much greater, more profitable, and more holy—that thy grace, O Jesus Christ, keeps away from us the death of the soul. For this life we ought much to thank thee, and because thou prolongest it with thy good gifts, we most heartily praise thee; howbeit, this life is but the way to eternal life, which we beseech thee, for thy death's sake, that thou wilt give us; and so shall we not only give thee, as we can, thanks in time for temporal things, but also eternal thanks for eternal things. O! grant to us these our desires for thy mercy's sake. Amen.

Subjects for meditation.—Think now that God has given thee this his blessing of meat, and also time that thou mightest repent to seek his glory, and the advantage of thy brethren. Therefore go thereabout; but first pray for grace well to begin, and again consider how thou hast been partakers of other men's

labours, as of the husbandman, the miller, the baker, the brewer, the butcher, the cook. See, therefore that thou art not a drone, but rather such a bee as may help the hive. If God have thus fed thy body, which he loveth not, except for thy soul's sake, how can it be, then, but that he will be much more ready to feed thy soul? Therefore take courage to thee, and go to him for grace accordingly.

Cogitations for about the mid-day time.

As the body is now enlightened on all sides with light, so see that thy mind may be. As God giveth thee thus plentifully this corporeal light, so pray him that he will give thee the spiritual light. As now the sun is come to the highest, and therefore will begin to draw downward, so is there nothing in the world so perfect and glorious, which, when it is at the full, will not decrease, and so wear away.

When you come home again, Pray :

There is nothing, O Lord, more like to thy holy nature than a quiet mind ; thou hast called us out of the troublesome disquietness of the world, into thy quiet rest and peace, which the world cannot give, being such a peace as passeth all men's understanding. Houses are ordained for us, that we might get into them from the injury of weather, from the cruelty of beasts, from disquietness of people, and from the toils of the world. O gracious Father, grant that through thy great mercy my body may enter into this house from outward actions, but so that it may become willing and obedient to the soul, and make no resistance thereagainst ; that in soul and body I may have a godly quietness, and peace to praise thee. Amen. Peace be to this house, and to all that dwell in the same.

Subjects for meditation.—Think what a return, and how joyful a return, it will be, to come to our eternal, most quiet, and most happy home: then all grief will be gone away; whatsoever here is pleasant and joyful, the same is nothing, but a very shadow in comparison.

At the sun's going down, Pray:

O! how unhappy are they, O Lord, on whom thy sun goeth down, and giveth no light! I mean thy grace, which is always clear as the mid-day. The mid-day is dark night unto them which depart from thee; in thee there never is night, but always daylight most clear. This visible sun has his courses, now up, now down; but thou, dear Lord, if we love thee, art always one. O that this veil of sin were taken from me, that the air might be always clear day in my mind.

Subjects for meditation.—Think that as we are not sorry when the sun goes down, because we know it will rise again, even so let us not sorrow for death wherethrough the soul and body part asunder, for they shall soon return, and come together again.

When you enter into your bed, Pray:

The day now ended, men give themselves to rest in the night, and so, this night finished, we shall rest in death. Nothing is more like this life than every day; nothing is more like death than sleep; nothing more like to our grave than our bed. O Lord, our Keeper and Defender, grant that I now, lying down to rest, being unable to keep myself, may be preserved from the crafts and assaults of the wicked enemy; and grant further, that when I have run the race of this life, thou wouldest of thy mercy call me unto thyself, that I may always live and watch with thee. Now, good God, give me to take my

rest in thee, and bring to pass that thy gracious goodness may be, even in sleep, before mine eyes ; that when sleeping I be not absent from thee, but may have my dreams to draw me unto thee, and so both soul and body may be kept pure and holy for ever.

Occasions to meditate.—Think that as this troublesome day is now past, and night is come, and so rest, bed, and pleasant sleep, which makes the most excellent princes and poorest peasants alike ; even so after the tumults, troubles, temptations, and tempests of this life, they that believe in Christ have prepared for them a heaven and rest, most pleasant and joyful. As you are not afraid to enter into your bed, and to dispose yourself to sleep ; so be not afraid to die, but rather prepare yourself for it ; think that now you are nearer your end by one day's journey, than you were in the morning.

When you feel sleep to be coming, Pray :

O Lord Jesus Christ, my Watchman and Keeper, take me to thy care ; grant that while my body is sleeping my mind may watch in thee, and be made joyful by some sight of that celestial and heavenly life, wherein thou art the King and Prince, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, and thy angels and holy souls are most happy citizens. O ! purify my soul, keep clean my body, that in both I may please thee, sleeping and waking, for ever. Amen.

THE END.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS
OF THE
REFORMERS AND FATHERS.
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

No. III.
ON THE CREED,
BY ARCHBISHOP CRANMER.



Adapted to the Use of the Society.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE following extract is taken from a work entitled, "Catechismus; that is to say, a Short Instruction into the Christian Religion, for the singular Commodity and Profit of Children and Young People, set forth by the Most Reverend Father in God, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1548." This catechism was not composed by Archbishop Cranmer, but was translated by him from the Latin of Justus Jonas, a German reformer; yet with such alterations as the translator thought fit. The Archbishop gave it the sanction of his name as above, at the time of its being published, and when charged with holding and circulating its doctrines, as an offence in the estimation of his persecutors, he did not shrink from the responsibility, but avowed both the publication and translation to be his own work.

SELECTIONS,

&c.

ON THE CREED.

THE holy Apostle St. Paul writeth expressly, that “without faith it is impossible to please God¹.” Also Christ himself saith, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved².”

Now, I trust, there is none among you but he is desirous to please God, and to enjoy everlasting life. Then if you will attain thereto, you must chiefly and most diligently apply your minds to learn the Christian faith, and the articles of the same: For you have heard, that without it there is nothing able to reconcile us to God the father, to pacify his wrath, and to bring us to the life everlasting. For although the Ten Commandments are an excellent, godly, and heavenly doctrine, yet we cannot be saved or justified by them: for we be not able, of our own strength and power, to fulfil the law and God’s holy commandments.—But by them we do learn what God requireth of us, and so be brought to the knowledge of our sin. For this is one office of the law, as St. Paul saith, to teach us our offences, and to set before our eyes the great fear of God, and the indignation which we have deserved by breaking his commandments; to the intent that we, acknowledging our own weakness, should fly to God’s grace and mercy.

¹ Heb. xi. 6.

² Mark. xvi. 16.

This fear of God is learned in the Ten Commandments ; and it is the beginning of wisdom. But the holy Christian faith is a much more high and excellent knowledge and wisdom, as St. Paul witnesseth, saying, "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: but we speak of the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory ¹." These be the words of St. Paul, whereby he declareth, that the science of faith passeth all other sciences, and teacheth heavenly and eternal wisdom, that exceedeth all men's philosophy. For by faith we learn to know God, what he is, and what love he beareth towards us, and how great benefits he hath heaped upon us. For by faith we be made the children of God ; and he giveth unto us the Holy Ghost, which doth lighten and kindle our hearts, that we may begin to keep his law, which else of our own strength we were not able to keep and fulfil. Wherefore, it is necessary for you to learn the doctrine of faith: for without it we cannot be justified or brought again into God's favour. For no man is just or righteous before God, that hath not the Holy Ghost ; and he that will receive the Holy Ghost must believe in Christ (for by faith we receive the Holy Ghost): therefore by faith we be justified. Again, if we will be saved, we must know God and our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is written, John xvii. 3. But we cannot know God, and his Son Jesus Christ, but by faith: therefore faith justifieth us, and bringeth life everlasting. Wherefore, apply yourselves diligently to learn the Christian faith, the which now I will show and rehearse to you.

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7, 8.

The Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the life everlasting. Amen.

This is the sum of our Christian faith, wherein God hath showed unto us what he is, and how great benefits he hath given, and daily doth give, unto us: to the intent that we should cast the anchor of our faith upon him, and take sure hold of his mercy and goodness, and comfort ourselves with the same, both in our lifetime, and also at our death. Wherefore, be diligent not only to say by rote the words of your Creed, but also to understand what is meant by the same, so that when you be asked any question thereof, you may be able to make a direct answer, and also in time to come to teach the same to your children. For what thing can be more shame to a Christian man than to profess the religion of Christ, and yet to be ignorant in the chief points of Christ's faith, and his doctrine? Considering that every Christian man is bound openly to declare his faith, when need shall so require, and to instruct his children in the same, that they may come to the true knowledge of Christ.

Of the Creation.

To the intent that you may the better understand

the true Christian faith and doctrine, you must first of all learn and know that God is a Spirit, as Christ saith, John iv. 24. God is not a bodily thing, which may be seen and felt. He is present in every place; he seeth and beholdeth all things, which we do, speak, or think; and yet he is not measured with any end, time, or place. And forasmuch as men's wit could not search or find out the knowledge of this high mystery of the nature of God, Christ himself, the Son of God, did open to us, that believe in him, what God is: that is to say, that there is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Three Persons, and yet One true and everlasting God.

And yet it is your bounden duty diligently to learn this lesson. And although these things pass all men's capacities, and the doctrine is hard for you to learn, yet in time to come you shall hear more of this matter. In the mean season bear away (I pray you) this one lesson, that there is one true and everlasting God, and yet three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And this we call the Trinity. And it is a great shame for you, that be Christians, not to learn this lesson: for all of you were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and thereby you were made Christians and the children of God, and obtained remission of your sins. Wherefore it is your duty to learn and know in whose name you are baptized, that so you may truly know God and your Father which you have in heaven. And this the Creed doth plainly and shortly teach unto you. For in the Creed, we say thus: I believe in God, the Father Almighty; and I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son; and last of all we say, I believe in the Holy Ghost. These three sentences be as much as to say, I believe in God, which is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Infidels and ungodly people do not know this, nor can they understand the same: but Christian men have this mystery so openly declared

unto them, in the word of God, that babes and young children hear and learn this lesson, almost as soon as they be able to creep out of their cradle. Wherefore we are bound heartily to thank God, who hath opened unto us such great wisdom and mysteries.— Hereby you perceive, that in this short treatise, called the Creed (as I said before), we be taught what God is, that is to say, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Also hereby we learn what great benefits God hath given unto us, and how tenderly he loveth, and favoureth us like a most gentle and merciful Father. In the which knowledge consisteth our felicity and blessedness; for if we did only know what God were, and did know nothing of his will toward us, whether he were our friend or no, favourable or angry, pleased or displeased with us; then our consciences, being wavering and doubtful, should be destitute and void of comfort. Wherefore listen to me diligently, that you may know what benefits those be, which God hath given among you, what love he beareth toward you, and what is the hope of everlasting life to the which we be called. The benefits of God toward us be infinite and innumerable, yet nevertheless, as God himself is three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, so there be three special works, whereby he hath declared his singular love toward us.

The first is, that God the Father hath created and made us of nothing, and given to us body and soul, and all things necessary to the maintenance of our lives, and hath made us lords over all earthly creatures.

The second is, that when we were all born in sin, God the Son did redeem us from our sins and wicked life.

The third is, that the Holy Ghost doth renew our hearts, sanctify us, and make us the temples of God.

And in these three benefits, given unto us by the

three Persons of the most blessed Trinity, consisteth the matter and effect of the whole Creed.

For this is the brief sum of the Creed to say, "I believe in God the Father, who did create and make me. I believe in God the Son, who did redeem me. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, who hath sanctified and hallowed me. For the which considerations we intend to divide this our exposition, made upon the Creed, into three parts; of the which the first shall be,—Of the Creation; the second, of the Redemption; and the third, of Sanctification.

And first we shall treat of the Creation, which is expressed in these words: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." Where note, that this word, "I believe," signifieth as much in this place as "I trust:" so that this sentence, "I believe in God the Father," is as much as to say, "I trust in God the Father, and look assuredly to receive all good things at his hand." Wherefore this is the meaning of the foresaid article, that we ought to put our trust in no creature; but in the true and living God only. For no creature can do us any good or harm, without the will of him. We ourselves made not ourselves (as it is written in the Psalms), nor can we either save ourselves, or deliver us from any peril. Therefore we ought to put our trust in God only, stick fast to him, hang upon him, and to look for all things reasonable at his hand. They, therefore, that trust in men, in their favour or friendship; they that trust in their own learning, wisdom, riches, power, friends, or any such thing; they do not truly believe in God, truly and wholly trust in him, nor look for all good things from him, but rather despise him, and worship for their god, and make an idol of that thing, wherein they put their trust, and so grievously offend God. Wherefore it must needs be, that at the length they must be brought to confusion and ruin, that they may learn by their own fall and

decay, that those were but vain things wherein they put their trust and confidence, and that only God is the sure rock and stay, upon whom whosoever leaneth shall not be deceived nor confounded. For it is the Lord God, which daily poureth upon us infinite benefits, which giveth us all things that we have need of, and defendeth us from all things that may hurt us either in body or in soul. And this is the fatherly love which he beareth towards us, to do all goodness towards us ~~Without~~ our merits or deservings: wherefore we ought to trust in him, yield ourselves wholly into his protection, to look for all good things at his hands, and with a merry heart and constant faith to cleave to his goodness in all things. And this is the highest and chiefest sacrifice; wherewith God is pleased and worshipped. And whosoever believeth in him after this sort, those he taketh for his well-beloved children, and in all things he declareth to them that he is their loving Father. Wherefore let us not put our trust in any creature, nor in any worldly thing, but at all times let us fasten our sure trust in our Lord God. So we shall be made his children, and enjoy life everlasting.

Now consider, what a God he is, in whom we believe, and in whom we put our trust. He is God the Father, the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth. And these words, ought not slightly to be passed over, for they be of great weight and importance. Wherefore, I pray you, as it were in balance, to weigh them diligently, and learn to understand them. For these words contain not in them worldly philosophy, or man's sapience¹, but heavenly and godly wisdom. Wherefore, I pray you, give good heed whilst I do declare them unto you.

First, this article teacheth us, that God is Almighty, that is to say, that he hath power to work and do all things whatsoever pleaseth him, and no creature in heaven or earth is able to let or withstand him, and

¹ Wisdom.

that nothing is impossible unto him. And this is the foundation and beginning of Christian knowledge and faith, to believe that God is almighty.

Believe then, with all your heart, that God is almighty, that he is able to work and do all things, that he willeth and performeth all things that he speaketh or promiseth. And in so doing, you shall find great peace and quietness in your consciences. For this is an exceeding comfort for us stedfastly to believe this article, that God is almighty: for hereby we be persuaded, in all perils and adversities, to put our trust in him, forasmuch as he is able to deliver us out of all troubles and afflictions, although they seem to man's reason remediless. Hereby also we be taught, to humble ourselves before God, and not to be proud, neither to despise nor forget him, when all things go after our own will: but to consider that God is almighty, and able with a beck to overturn kingdoms, to cast down the rich, to exalt the poor, to punish the wicked, and to destroy us, if we provoke him to anger. Wherefore, mark well this word "Almighty," which is as much as to say this; No man is so sore sick, but God is able to heal him. No man is so poor, but God can make him rich. No man is so simple or dull-witted, whom He is not able to make wise. No man is so vile or little regarded, but He is able to promote him to high honours. No man is so great a sinner, but He is able to justify him. Wherefore, in all chances we must put our trust in God only: for he is able to do whatsoever he willeth, and all things are subject under his dominion.

Furthermore, in this article God is called, Maker of heaven and earth, that is to say, God made heaven and earth, and all things contained therein, of nothing. For God made not these things as a carpenter maketh an house (who cannot work if he lack his tools and stuff); but he only said, Let it be done; and all things were done. And therefore, he

hath a new title, which was never heard among all the philosophers, being called, the Creator of the world, that is to say, that by his word he wonderfully made all things of nothing. And as soon as he did speak, all the world was made.

Thus he made man, and gave him body and soul, reason and wisdom, and did set under his government the earth and all things that grow thereon, as all kinds of trees with their fruits, all kinds of herbs and flowers, all fishes of the sea, fowls of the air, and all manner of beasts, tame or wild: and he made man lord over all these creatures, that he might use them, partly to his nourishment and food, and partly to his apparel and ornament of his body; insomuch that he made the sun, moon, and all the stars, for this end, that they should serve man. And (what is most comfort to us of all) he made all these creatures before he did create man, declaring thereby, that he is careful for us, and provideth such things as we have need of, yea, before we be born.

Wherefore, let us be of good cheer, and, putting our trust in God, let us reason on this fashion. Forasmuch as God made heaven and earth, it is evident thereby, that he is Lord and Master of the same, and that all things, as well in heaven as in earth, are done according to his will.

And forasmuch as he made all things for us, it is also manifest thereby, that he willeth all creatures to do us service. Let us therefore follow the counsel of Christ, who saith, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they

grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

These be the words of Christ, by the which he exhorteth us to put our trust and confidence in God, our Father, and stedfastly to believe, that he which hath given us our life, is both able and willing also to give us all things necessary to the maintenance of our life. For he is the Maker of all things, and all creatures obey his will and commandment: and if there lacked any thing, that should help us, he is able every day to make all new again, as every year he maketh all things to renew and spring again. Thus by these words we learn, that God hath made heaven and earth, and all things contained therein, for us, and for our convenience: and that he both can and will give us our daily food and living. Wherefore let no man trust to his own wit, reason, or compassing, thinking he is able to get his living or riches by his own carefulness, or to maintain his life, but let us put our trust in God, our Father Almighty: he will feed, nourish, and maintain us, as long as it shall please him. Nevertheless, it is our part to labour diligently, and every man is bound to do his duty in his vocation and calling. For God willeth not that we should be idle, and lie all the day on the one side, looking that he should put meat into our mouths, as the nurse doth feed young children, but he commandeth us to ply our labours and occupations, and then to cast all our care upon him.

Thus I have expounded unto you the first article of our belief, containing the doctrine of the creation and making of the world, the which heavenly philosophy (to the intent you may the more easily bear it in your memories) I will knit up in few words, that when you be demanded,—How understand you

the first article of your belief? you may thus shortly answer, I believe that God the Father hath made me and all creatures in heaven and earth: that he hath given to me, and conserveth my body and soul, reason, senses, eyes, ears, and all my other members. Also, I believe that the same Almighty Lord and God doth daily give to me, and to us all, meat, drink, clothes, wife, children, house, land, riches, cattle, and all things necessary to the maintenance of our lives; and that he doth daily defend, keep, and preserve us from all peril, and deliver us from all evil. And all this he doth of his own mercy and goodness, without any worthiness or deservings. For the which benefits it is our duty to render to him continual and everlasting thanks, to obey him in all things, and to take heed that we be not unthankful, to him that hath showed such great kindness toward us.

Thus you have heard the true and plain meaning of this part of the Creed. Now it is your part deeply to print the same in your hearts, that you may put your whole trust and confidence in the true and living God, our heavenly Father.

And forasmuch as faith is the work of God, and the light of our hearts, which God putteth in us by his word and holy Spirit (so that we cannot attain faith and the knowledge of Christ without God's word and true preachers); therefore accustom yourselves, even from your tender age, to hear the word of God, that he, by his Holy Spirit, may move and stir up your hearts to true faith and knowledge of him. And beside that, you shall desire God with most hearty prayers, that as he hath given you the gift of faith, so he will continue and increase the same in you, that as you grow in age, so also you may grow in the knowledge of Christ. For he that believeth in Christ, is made thereby the Son of God, and heir of life everlasting. And then he giveth us his holy Spirit in our hearts, whereby we love God

and keep all his commandments. All these benefits we receive by faith, in the which whosoever continueth to the end of his life shall be saved; the which God grant to us all. Amen.

Of our Redemption.

I declared unto you heretofore, that the Creed treateth chiefly of three things, that is to say, of God the Father, that made the world; of God the Son, that redeemed the world; and of God the Holy Ghost, that sanctifieth the world. And in the former part I taught you the high and heavenly philosophy of the creation. Wherefore now I will utter unto you the great mystery of our Redemption, which is contained in these words of the Creed:—

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord; which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven. He sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

In this second part of the Creed we may learn to know the Second person in the Trinity, the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord. And as in the first article ye have learned what benefits we receive of God the Father, to the sustentation and maintenance of this temporal and transitory life: so, in this second part, we shall learn to know how great treasures and rich gifts we have received by the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to the attaining of the perfect and everlasting life. And here you may consider how great was the misery, and how horrible was the indignation of God, which we were brought unto by Adam. So great it was that neither gold nor silver, nor any other thing was able to buy us out of the same, but only Jesus Christ, the Son of God, by his death and effusion of his most precious blood. And of this

great misery and indignation of God toward us, this was the cause.

At what time God had made Adam and Eve, and set them in paradise, he entreated them like a most loving and gentle Father: for he made them lords over all the living creatures, both beasts, fish, and fowl, and did give them all trees that bare fruit, that they might feed thereon; only he forbade them to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And he gave them warning of the great loss and damage that they should suffer, if they ate of that tree, saying, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Their duty had been unto so gentle a God and so merciful a Father, in their hearts to believe him, trust him, and love him; to obey him, and to keep all his commandments gladly. But our most crafty enemy, Satan, envying man's felicity, spake to Eve by the serpent, and said, "Ye shall not surely die, but ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." And with these most poisoned words he persuaded Eve to eat of the fruit which was forbid. And Eve gave of the same to Adam, who also did eat thereof: and so they did break God's commandment.

Now I pray you mark what they lost by this their disobedience. First, when Adam and Eve were thus deceived by the serpent, and persuaded that God did not favour them, but had envy at them, that they should have knowledge of good and ill, and that for envy he forbade them to eat of that fruit, that should give them such great knowledge, they did no more trust God, but began to trust themselves, and did study to care and provide for themselves. Secondly, when they no more trusted God, they could no more find in their hearts to love him, but began to dote upon themselves, and to think that they had no better friend either in heaven or earth than their own selves. And after that they thus put their trust and confidence in themselves, and dotingly loved all that was their own, by and by followed fear and concupiscence: for by and by they

began to hate and eschew all things that were painful or unpleasant to the flesh, and dotingly to lust and long for such things as were delectable and pleasant to the flesh.

Hereby you perceive how our first parents, Adam and Eve, poisoned with the venom of the serpent, were cast into four horrible vices or diseases; The first is, that they did not trust in God; The second, that they did not love God; The third, that they did not fear him, except as a cruel tyrant; The fourth, that they were replenished with concupiscence, and evil desires, lusts, and appetites: and these be the roots of original sin, out of the which all other sins do spring and grow. So Adam and Eve had a very great fall, that fell from God's benediction, favour, and love, into God's curse, anger, and displeasure; that fell from original righteousness into original sin, by the which fall, all the strength and powers both of their bodies and souls were sore decayed and corrupted: and as our first parents, Adam and Eve, were infected and corrupted, even so be we, that be their children. For as we see, by daily experience, that commonly diseased parents beget diseased children; so likewise, as our first parents, Adam and Eve, did not put their trust in God, no more do they that be carnally born of them: and as they loved not God, so their children love him not; and as they followed their own concupiscence, lusts, and appetites, and not the will of God, even so do all their issue: so that all their posterity on earth be sinners, even in their mothers' wombs: for they have not their trust in God, they love not God, they have not a fatherly fear unto him, they be full of ill lusts, and appetites, and desires, as you have heard, in the tenth Commandment: and for this cause the Scripture doth say, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;" and St. Paul saith, that we are "by nature the children of God's wrath." So that we all should everlastingly be ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ it, if Christ by his death had not redeemed us.

Wherefore, mark you this part of your Creed, that teacheth you both to know Christ, and by what means he doth remedy you. For first, in the Creed, he is called "the only Son," or only begotten Son, of God. Wherefore it must needs follow, that he is very God by nature, born of God the Father, before the foundation of the world was laid. He is the everlasting Wisdom and Word of God, by the which God the Father made all things. That he is also very man, it is evidently expressed in these words; "I believe in Jesus Christ, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried." And these two aforesaid things, I cannot comprehend more shortly nor aptly than by these words: Christ our Lord is very God and very man.

Secondly, learn this also, by what means Christ did redeem us. The Scripture saith "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by obedience of one shall many be made righteous¹." Whatsoever God hath commanded us in the ten commandments, which we have not fulfilled, because we be all sinners, that Christ himself hath fulfilled for us; and whatsoever punishment we have deserved to suffer of God for our sins and offences, that Christ hath taken upon himself and suffered for us. By this you may perceive how requisite it was that Christ, God and man, should be conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of a pure virgin. For if Christ should redeem us, and satisfy for our sins, then must he needs be holy and without sin: for if he had been guilty and a sinner, then could he not have holpen his own self, but he must needs have had another Saviour and Redeemer for him, as well as we have for us; for whatsoever he had done or suffered should have been worthily for his own offences, and yet could he not have satisfied for himself, much less then could he have satisfied for

others. Wherefore, it was necessary (if he should satisfy for us,) that he should be conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of a Virgin, that his nativity might be pure, without sin, and not corrupt, as ours is; that our corrupt nativity might be purified and made holy, by the holy and pure nativity of Christ. Therefore, we say in the Creed, "He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," that Christ, being pure and clean from all sin, might redeem sinners and satisfy for them. Now, forasmuch as the justice of God doth require, that Christ should suffer and make satisfaction for us, and do all things, that we were bound to do, it was necessary that he should be made man: for if he had not been very man, he could not have done for us all those things which we were bound to do.

And again, if he had not been very God, he could not have been pure and clean from all sin, and so have made a true and perfect satisfaction for our sins: for none can perfectly fulfil the will of God, but God himself alone. Wherefore in that he suffered for our sins, thereby he declared that he was very man. Again, he gave most certain and evident tokens of his Godhead, in that he overcame and vanquished the devil, sin, and death: for if he had not been very God, he could not have loosed the bands of death, neither have raised himself from death to life.—So you hear that our Lord Jesus Christ was very God and very man, not conceived in sin (as we be), but conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the most pure Virgin Mary. And as man he suffered death for us, and descended into hell: but as God, he loosed the bands and pains of death, he destroyed the kingdom of death, he rose from death to life, and so paid the ransom for our sins, and took away all the guiltiness of the same. Therefore, when we believe in Christ, and, stedfastly cleaving to the word of God, secretly persuade ourselves in our hearts that we be thus redeemed by Christ, then God is no more angry or displeased with us for our sins,

but freely and mercifully he forgiveth us all our offences for the death and passion of his Son Jesus Christ, and he giveth us also the Holy Ghost, by whose help we may withstand sin, and be delivered from the same. The which matters St. Paul doth knit up in one brief sentence, not so short as notable and weighty; saying, "Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." In the which sentence St. Paul doth not only declare what Christ did, but also ~~for~~ what end, and for whom he suffered death and rose again.

For seeing that Christ was that most innocent Lamb that never was blotted with any spot of sin, and yet suffered as a sinner, it is evident hereby that he did it not for himself, but took upon him our sins, and bore for us the burden which we should have borne. Moreover, seeing that Christ was not overcome by death, but by his mighty power he did vanquish death, and rose from death to life, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, hereby we may evidently perceive that the great wrath and indignation of God to us hath an end, and that by our lively faith in him our sins be forgiven us, and that we be reconciled into the favour of God, made holy and righteous. For then God doth no more impute unto us our former sins, but he doth impute and give unto us the justice and righteousness of his Son Jesus Christ, which suffered for us.

These are but few words, but surely they be of great importance! For in this sentence St. Paul includeth the sense and effect of the whole Gospel, when he saith, "Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." For likewise, as when another man doth pay my ransom and satisfy or suffer for me, I myself am judged to have paid the same, and no man after can accuse me thereof; and when another is bound for me, if he be by any lawful means discharged, I myself am counted to be discharged: even so, forasmuch as Christ himself

took upon him the bond of death for us, and to satisfy for us, and so did indeed by his death ; we ourselves, for whom he was thus bound, justly be delivered and discharged from death and damnation. And so we be counted righteous, forasmuch as no man dare accuse us for that sin, for the which satisfaction is made by our Saviour Christ. And when our Saviour, Jesus Christ, had thus satisfied for our sin, and so had overcome death and hell, then, like a most valiant conqueror, he ascended into heaven, where God his Father received him with a most glorious triumph, and placed him on his right hand, and made him Lord over all creatures, and therefore he is called in the Creed also, " our Lord." For if he had not ransomed and redeemed us, we had been cast down to hell for ever. But seeing that he redeemed and bought us, therefore be we his, and he is our Lord and Master, and him we must love, obey, and serve.

And this is our most high and everlasting comfort, that Jesus Christ is our Lord, and we his servants: for because he is our Lord, therefore he will defend us, and deliver us from all dangers. And although we be sinners, yet he will forgive us our sins, because he hath paid the ransom and debt due for the same. And although we die, yet he will raise us up again, because he hath overcome and conquered death.

Wherefore, seeing that we have so mighty a Lord and Master, we be out of all peril and danger. But we again, above all things, must study to obey our Lord and Master, and do those things which he commandeth. For he hath redeemed and bought us for this intent and purpose, that we should be just and holy, as he himself is holy.—And he that is not obedient to Christ's commandments, shall be sore punished: for our Lord Jesus Christ shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead.

Wherefore, labour with all diligence and study, that when Christ shall come again to judge the world, he may find you holy and obedient: for then he

will reward you with everlasting life. After this manner, Christ redeemed us from sin, and from the horrible offence of Adam, by whom we were all condemned: for by Christ's passion and death, and by his Gospel, we have obtained his holy Spirit, whereby we may also love God;—And this Holy Ghost reneweth us, and cleanseth us from all evil lusts and desires, that we being thus made holy and righteous, may keep God's commandments and serve our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore, believe ye with all your heart in this Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord, and doubt not but that he hath suffered for our sins, and contented the justice of his Father for the same, and hath brought us again into his favour, and made us his well-beloved children and heirs of his kingdom. And when you be asked, How understand you the second part of the Creed? you shall answer, I believe that Jesus Christ, very God, begotten of God the Father, and very man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who by his precious blood and holy passion hath redeemed me, a miserable and condemned wretch, from all my sins, from death eternal, and from the tyranny of the devil, that I should be his own true subject, and live within his kingdom, and serve him in a new and everlasting life and justice¹, even as our Lord Jesus, after he rose from death unto life, liveth and reigneth everlastingly. Or else, if you will answer more shortly, you may say thus: "I believe that Christ was delivered to death for our sins, and rose again for our justification."

Of our Sanctification.

Now remaineth the third part of the Creed to be declared, which treateth of our sanctification, how we be made holy. And it is spoken in these words: "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic

¹ Righteousness.

Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." *Amen.*

In the second part of the Creed (which treateth of our redemption and price given for us) you have been taught, good children, to know the second Person in the Trinity, Jesus Christ, what he is, and what he hath done for us, that he was made man for our sakes, that he took upon him our sins, and suffered for us the fear and pangs of death and hell, and had victory over them by his passion and death. And after, by his godly and victorious power, he rose again from death to life. And after this most glorious conquest, he ascended into heaven, where he sitteth at the right hand of his Father, and is our Lord, and we are his servants dearly bought.

All this you have learned in the last part; but now, in this third part of the Creed you shall learn to know the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, and all his benefits and gifts, that we may know what we have received of God after our redemption, whereby we may be made meet to come to everlasting life through the merits of Christ. For although our Lord Jesus Christ hath redeemed us from the captivity of sin, death, and hell, and hath set us again in the favour of God, yet we should have no knowledge of these great benefits, we should feel in our consciences no comfort, joy or peace by the same, if they were not declared unto us by the preaching of God's most holy word. And our consciences should still remain troubled, at the fear of eternal death, and all naughty desires and concupiscences of the flesh should ever remain in us (even as from Adam's time they be in us as soon as we be born), and so we should be utterly unapt to the kingdom of God and life everlasting, if we should still remain as we be born.

For if we will be the heirs of God and everlasting life, we must be born again, and sanctified or made

holy, as appertaineth to the children of the most holy God. Now this new birth or sanctification the Holy Ghost, worketh in us; and therefore he is called the Holy Ghost, because every thing that is sanctified or hallowed, is sanctified or made holy by him. Wherefore when the Holy Ghost is not in man, then it is not possible that he should be holy. And for this cause St. Paul writing to the Romans, doth call the Holy Ghost the Spirit of holiness, that is to say, the Spirit that maketh holiness. Learn therefore, good children, that all we must be made holy and new men by virtue of the Holy Ghost, and that we cannot attain this holiness by our own strength or works; and therefore we must believe in the Holy Ghost that he will sanctify us at such time or place, and after that sort and manner as it shall please him. And it is our part to give place to his working, and not to withstand the same. And therefore we say in this Creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost." But it is necessary here to speak of some things,—the manner of sanctification, how and after what manner the Holy Ghost doth hallow us, that we may so prepare ourselves, or rather give place to the Holy Ghost which provoketh¹ us, that he with his light and almighty strength and power may work his will in us.

Now I desire you to mark diligently by what means and fashion the Holy Ghost doth work this sanctification or hallowing in us. After that our Lord Jesus Christ by his death, passion, and resurrection had redeemed us, and obtained for us, that our sins should be forgiven, and we be made the children of God, shortly after, on the feast of Pentecost, he sent down upon his Apostles the Holy Ghost, in the likeness of fiery tongues.

The which Holy Ghost gave them wisdom, cunning², audacity³, and constancy to teach boldly this Holy

¹ Stirreth up.² Knowledge.³ Boldness.

Gospel of Christ, that is to say, this Christian faith, whereof we do speak. And where they could not be present themselves, or long abide and continue in their own persons, thither they sent their disciples and other godly and learned men, and to them they gave the Holy Ghost, by laying their hands upon their heads. And this rite or ceremony to order preachers or ministers of God's word hath continued in the church even from the Apostles' time to this day, and shall endure unto the world's end. For St. Paul saith, "How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" And here you may learn that this Holy Ghost which we preach, and the doctrine of the grace of Christ taught in the holy church, cometh not of the will of man, but by the commandment of God, and by the motion of the Holy Ghost, which doth stir up men's minds to publish God's most holy word, and doth work by his secret inspiration in the preachers and ministers of the same. For they would not be able so much as to open their mouths to teach so high mysteries and heavenly wisdom, if the Holy Ghost did not move them thereto, and work in them. Neither would the hearers so greatly esteem the preachers and give so good ear unto them, except the Holy Ghost did persuade them that the doctrine of the Gospel were of God and came from heaven. Now, the Holy Ghost worketh by the word on this fashion.—First, he that believeth the Gospel, and receiveth the doctrine of Christ, is made the son of God, as St. John witnesseth in his Gospel, saying "As many as received him, gave he them power to become the sons of God." For when we believe in Christ, and are baptized, then we be born again, and are made the children of God. And when we be his children, then he giveth the Holy Ghost into our hearts, as St. Paul testifieth, writing thus: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father." And when we have received the

Holy Ghost, he doth kindle in our hearts true love towards God, as St. Paul writeth in the Epistle to the Romans, in the fifth chapter. "The love of God," saith he, "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." And where the true love of God reigneth, there are God's commandments kept, and there beginneth a certain obedience to his will and pleasure.

Furthermore, the Holy Ghost doth stay the flesh and the lusts of the same, and helpeth us to overcome them, that we be not carried away by them, but may continue in cleanness and holiness of life. These be the benefits and works of the Holy Ghost in us. And to the intent you may the more easily bear them away, I will (as briefly as I can) repeat them again unto you.

First of all, the Holy Ghost provoketh and stirreth up men to preach God's word. Then he moveth men's hearts to faith, and calleth them to baptism, and then by faith and baptism he worketh so that he maketh us new men again. And when we be thus newly born and made again, and we become the children of God, then the Holy Ghost doth dwell in us, and make us holy and godly, that we may be the temples of God, in whom God may dwell and inhabit. Also this Holy Ghost doth daily more and more increase and establish our faith, that we like most loving children, may cleave to our heavenly Father. The same Holy Ghost doth also assure and warrant us, that our sin be forgiven and that our pardon is signed with God's seal. He doth also kindle in us a fervent love towards God, and maketh us willing to keep God's law and commandments, and helpeth us also to fight against sin, and to withstand our ill-appetites and desires. Furthermore with the cross of sickness, and divers other kinds of afflictions and adversities, the Holy Ghost doth, as it were, crucify and mortify us to the world, that we may live to Christ. And this work he worketh continually in us, and ceaseth not till

he have wrought in our hearts a perfect faith and a perfect charity, and until sin and all evil desires, be clean at length purged out of us by the death of our bodies; and then we shall be perfect in all holiness, and clean delivered from all sin and adversity, and be heirs of our Father's kingdom, and his true and most dearly beloved children.

Wherefore, as you have heretofore been taught, that we ought to believe in God the Father who made us, and in God the Son that redeemed or bought us, so you must now learn to believe in the Holy Ghost that hath hallowed us, and doth continually more and more renew and make holy, all those that believe the Gospel. For he that believeth in Jesus Christ, that he is our Lord and our Redeemer, to him God giveth the Holy Ghost to make him holy and righteous. As St. Paul witnesseth, saying, "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." And forasmuch as it hath now been plainly declared unto you, after what sort and manner the Holy Ghost doth sanctify us, it is your part not only to imprint this lesson diligently in your minds, but also to desire God, with continual and earnest prayers, that he will vouchsafe more and more to sanctify you.

And as much as lieth in you, apply yourselves to hear godly sermons, and give your hearts to God, like wax apt and meet to receive what things soever it shall please him to print in you.

For he that is willing and glad to listen to godly sermons, he that is studious to learn the word of God, wherein Christ is preached, and with a stedfast faith cleave to the promise of the Gospel, he is made partaker of this sanctification and holiness, and of this so great comfort and everlasting salvation. For God saith by his prophet Isaiah, "My word shall not return to me in vain." And St. Paul saith, that "the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe."

Now the rest that followeth in the Creed, is a short declaration of those things before rehearsed. For it followeth in the Creed,—“I believe in the holy Catholic Church ;” that is to say, all godly and Christian men must believe that the Gospel or doctrine of God’s grace, through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, is never in vain published in the world, or sowed abroad without fruit, but ever there is found some company of men, or some congregation of good people, which believe the Gospel and be saved. And this company of men which believeth the Gospel, although here upon earth they be severed in sundry places, yet are they called one holy Catholic or universal church of Christ ; that is to say, a multitude, congregation, or company of Christian people. For this word, church, doth not here betoken a temple or church builded of timber and stone, but it signifieth a company of men lightened with the Spirit of Christ, which do receive the Gospel and come together to hear God’s word and to pray. And this Christian church is a communion of saints, that is to say, all that be of this communion or company be holy, and be one holy body under Christ their head : they be one holy congregation or assembly. And this congregation receiveth of their head and Lord Jesus Christ all spiritual riches and gifts that pertain to the sanctification and making holy of the same body. And these ghostly treasures be common to the whole body, and to every member of the same. For he, that is unfeignedly a faithful and godly man, is made partaker of these benefits ; and these are the said gifts, which be common to the whole Church of Christ, and to every member of the same.

The first is, that God the Father (that everlasting and endless Majesty) is our most gentle and merciful Father ; that God the Son is our Redeemer and Mediator between the Father and us ; and that God, the Holy Ghost, is the common Sanctifier or Hallower of all them that have a true faith in God.

The second is, the preaching of the Gospel, the administration of baptism, and the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the which we are made partakers of all the inheritance of heaven, and of all the benefits of Christ. The third is prayer. The fourth is the cross of affliction and adversity which God sendeth to all godly men to make them to know him, to prove thereby and to try their faith, to mortify their flesh, and to make clean the corruption of the same.

And here I speak only of the cross which good men suffer. For the afflictions of the unfaithful and ungodly do rather hurt them, than make them holy. For inasmuch as their impatientness is increased by such adversity, they be brought to more desperation and damnation.

Now it is very good for you to know these things, that you may also know that there is nothing in heaven or earth better for us than is the true knowledge of God, and that these excellent gifts and benefits cannot be had, but only in the foresaid Church or congregation, and nowhere else. But when the true Church (which is ruled by the Holy Ghost and the word of God) doth promise us these so great riches and benefits, we ought not to doubt but that we have already received them. And when the Church doth appoint and ordain us to be preachers and ministers of these most precious treasures, we must stedfastly believe, that God effectuously worketh with us, that he is present with us, and that he at all times doth strengthen us against the world and the devil, and that he doth help us to do all things, according to our calling, prosperously and with good success.

Again, we must believe the remission of sins. Therefore next unto this article, I believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, is added "The forgiveness of sins." For wheresoever the Church of Christ is, there is freely offered that eternal comfort above all measure, that is to say, the favour

of God and the remission of sins. And without that Church there is no remission of sin.—Wherefore we must seek remission of sins in the Church of Christ, and desire absolution, that when the true Church by its ministers doth promise us (being penitent) remission of our sins, and here in earth doth absolve us, we may surely trust that in heaven also before God, we be absolved and pardoned.

Further, we must believe the resurrection of the flesh: wherefore after the article of the remission of sins followeth next this article: “I believe the resurrection of the body.” For among other punishments for original sin laid upon Adam and his posterity, we daily see this horrible pain¹, that the goodly, beautiful body of man, created to immortality, must needs once be dissolved by death, and brought to a filthy and stinking corpse, that the tyranny of sin (which so long as we live reigneth in our flesh) by our death may cease and have an end, as St. Paul saith unto the Romans: for by death of the body, cease all the desires, concupiscences, and rages of the mind, which be against the will and commandments of God. There cease also all sins against our neighbour, as ire, envy, lechery, covetousness, pride, and all ill affections: and at the last day God shall raise us again from death, so that such infirmities and sins shall no more be found in us, but we shall be pure, spiritual, and immortal, and like to the bright and clear body of Christ. And that we may the more assuredly believe this, both Christ himself rose from death, and many saints also with him.

Lastly, we must believe in everlasting life. Wherefore it followeth in the Creed, “I believe in everlasting life;” that is to say, I believe, that when we shall rise from death, then we shall live ever with Christ in perfect holiness and justice, and in such a glorious joy, as no tongue can tell or heart think. And this trea-

¹ Punishment.

tise of the Creed we must end with this word, "Amen;" which is as much to say, as, I believe that all the articles of our belief, before rehearsed, be very true, and thereof I have a true faith, trust, and confidence. Therefore, from the bottom of your hearts, you must believe in the Holy Ghost, which doth promise unto us remission of our sins, by all the true preachers and ministers of God's word. And he doth also give light to our hearts and minds, and moveth us to believe God's word, and to put our faith and trust in him. And the same Holy Ghost doth daily purify and sanctify us, purge and cleanse us from sin, and, after this bodily death, shall raise us again to everlasting life. And take this for a sure conclusion, and doubt nothing thereof, that the Holy Ghost, as he hath begun these things in us, so he will finish the same in us, if we obey him, and continue in faith unto the end of our lives; for he that continueth unto the end shall be saved. And this is the sum, and also the most plain understanding of this third part of the Creed, treating of our sanctification or hallowing. Wherefore, mark well this lesson, that when ye be demanded, How understand you the third part of the Creed? ye may answer thus: I believe that neither by man's strength, power, nor wisdom, neither by mine own endeavour, nor compass of mine own reason, I am able to believe in Jesus Christ, or to come unto him. But the Holy Ghost did call me by the word of the Gospel, and with the gifts of his grace he hath hitherto endowed me, and hallowed me, and in the true faith he hath hitherto preserved and confirmed me: and this he hath not done only to me, but also he calleth and gathereth together, in the unity of one faith, and one baptism, the universal Church that is here on earth, and he alloweth, keepeth, and preserveth the same, in the true knowledge of Christ and faith in his promises. And in this Church he giveth free and general pardon to me, and to all that believe in him, of all our

sins, offences, and trespasses; and at the last day he shall raise me and all others that be dead; and all that die in the true faith of Jesus Christ, he shall glorify in the life everlasting. Therefore, to the said Holy Ghost, which sanctifieth us, with the Father that made and created us, and the Son that redeemed us, be given all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

**A SERMON OF THE SALVATION OF MANKIND, BY
ONLY CHRIST, OUR SAVIOUR, FROM SIN AND
DEATH EVERLASTING ¹.**

BECAUSE all men be sinners and offenders against God, and breakers of his Law and Commandments, therefore can no man by his own acts, works, and deeds (seem they never so good) be justified, and made righteous before God; but every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another righteousness, or justification, to be received at God's own hands; that is to say, the remission and forgiveness of his sins and trespasses, in such things as he hath offended. And this justification, or righteousness, which we so receive of God's mercy and Christ's merits, embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God, for our perfect and full justification. For the more full understanding hereof, it is our parts and duty ever to remember the great mercy of God, how that (all the world being wrapped in sin by breaking of the Law) God sent his only Son our Saviour Christ into this world, to fulfil the Law for us, and by shedding of his most precious blood, to make a sacrifice and satisfaction, or, as it may be called, amends to his Father for our sins, to assuage his wrath and indignation conceived against us for the same.

Insomuch that infants, being baptized and dying in their infancy, are by this sacrifice washed from their sins, brought to God's favour, and made his children, and inheritors of his kingdom of heaven. And they which in act or deed, do sin after their bap-

¹ This Homily being declared to be Cranmer's, both by his enemy Bishop Gardiner, and by his friend Bishop Woolton, it has been printed among the Archbishop's works by his Oxford editor.

tism, when they turn again to God unfeignedly, they are likewise washed by this sacrifice from their sins, in such sort, that there remaineth not any spot of sin, that shall be imputed to their damnation. This is that justification, or righteousness, which St. Paul speaketh of, when he saith, *A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.* Rom. iii. 28. And again he saith, *We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* Gal. ii. 16. And although this justification be free unto us, yet it cometh not so freely unto us, that there is no ransom paid therefore at all. But here may man's reason be astonished¹, reasoning after this fashion: if a ransom be paid for our redemption, then it is not given us freely. For a prisoner that payeth his ransom is not let go freely; for if he go freely, then he goeth without ransom: for what is it else to go freely, than to be set at liberty without payment of ransom? This reason is satisfied by the great wisdom of God in this mystery of our redemption who hath so tempered his justice and mercy together, that he would neither by his justice condemn us unto the everlasting captivity of the devil, and his prison of hell, remediless for ever without mercy, nor by his mercy deliver us clearly, without justice, or payment of a just ransom; but with his endless mercy he joined his most upright and equal justice. His great mercy he showed unto us in delivering us from our former captivity, without requiring of any ransom to be paid, or amends to be made upon your parts, which thing by us had been impossible to be done. And whereas it lay not in us to do that, he provided a ransom for us, that was, the most precious body and blood of his own

¹ Astonied is somewhat more than astonished, namely, stunned, or confounded. See Dan. iii, 24.

most dear and best beloved Son Jesus Christ, who, besides this ransom; fulfilled the Law for us perfectly. And so the justice of God and his mercy did embrace together, and fulfilled the mystery of our redemption. And of this justice and mercy of God knit together, speaketh St. Paul in the third chapter to the Romans, *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness.* Rom. iii. And in the tenth chapter, *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth.* Rom. x. And in the eighth chapter, *What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* Rom. viii. In these foresaid places, the Apostle toucheth specially three things, which must concur and go together in our justification. Upon God's part, his great mercy and grace; upon Christ's part, justice. that is, the satisfaction of God's justice, or the price of our redemption, by the offering of his body, and shedding of his blood, with fulfilling of the Law perfectly and thoroughly; and upon our part, true and lively faith in the merits of Jesus Christ, which yet is not ours, but by God's working in us. So that in our justification, is not only God's mercy and grace, but also his justice, which the Apostle calleth the justice of God, and it consisteth in paying our ransom, and fulfilling of the Law: and so the grace of God doth not shut out the justice of God in our justification, but only shutteth out the justice of man, that is to say, the justice of our works, as to be merits of deserving our justification. And therefore St. Paul declareth here nothing upon the behalf of man concerning his justification, but only a true

and lively faith; which nevertheless is the gift of God, and not man's only work, without God. And yet that faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified; but it shutteth them out from the office of justifying. So that, although they be all present together in him that is justified, yet they justify not altogether. Neither doth faith shut out the justice¹ of our good works, necessarily to be done afterward of duty towards God; (for we are most bounden to serve God, in doing good deeds, commanded by him in his holy Scripture, all the days of our life :) but it excludeth them, so that we may not do them to this intent, to be made just by doing of them. For all the good works that we can do be imperfect, and therefore not able to deserve our justification; but our justification doth come freely by the mere mercy of God, and of so great and free mercy, that whereas all the world was not able of themselves to pay any part towards their ransom, it pleased our heavenly Father of his infinite mercy, without any our desert or deserving, to prepare for us the most precious jewels of Christ's body and blood, whereby our ransom might be fully paid, the Law fulfilled, and his justice fully satisfied. So that Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in him. He, for them, paid their ransom by his death. He, for them, fulfilled the Law in his life. So that now in him, and by him, every true Christian man may be called a fulfiller of the Law; forasmuch as that which their infirmity lacketh, Christ's justice¹ hath supplied.

Ye have heard, of whom all men ought to seek their justification and righteousness, and how also this righteousness cometh unto men by Christ's death and merits: ye heard also, how that three things are required to the obtaining of our righte-

ousness; that is, God's mercy, Christ's justice, and a true and a lively faith, out of the which faith spring good works. Also before was declared at large, that no man can be justified by his own good works, that no man fulfilleth the Law, according to the full request of the Law.

And St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians proveth the same, saying thus: *If there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.* Gal. iii. And again he saith, *If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.* Gal. ii. And again he saith, *Whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace.* Gal. v. And furthermore, he writeth to the Ephesians on this wise, *By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.* Ephes. ii. And, to be short, the sum of all Paul's disputation is this; that if justice¹ come of works, then it cometh not of grace; and if it come of grace, then it cometh not of works. And to this end tend all the prophets, as St. Peter saith in the tenth of the Acts; *To him (Christ) all the Prophets give witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins.* Acts x. And after this wise, to be justified only by this true and lively faith in Christ, speak all the old and ancient authors, both Greeks and Latins: of whom I will specially rehearse three, Hilary, Basil, and Ambrose. St. Hilary saith these words plainly in the ninth Canon upon Matthew; "Faith only justifieth." And St. Basil, a Greek author, writeth thus; "This is a perfect and a whole glorying in God, when a man advanceth not himself for his own righteousness, but acknowledgeth himself to lack true justice and righteousness, and to be justified by the only faith in Christ. And Paul,"

¹ Righteousness.

saith he, "doth glory in the contempt of his own righteousness, and that he *looketh for the righteousness which is of God by faith.*" Philip. iii.

These be the very words of St. Basil; and St. Ambrose, a Latin author, saith these words; "This is the ordinance of God, that they which believe in Christ should be saved without works, by faith only, freely receiving remission of their sins." Consider diligently these words, "without works," "by faith only," "freely we receive remission of our sins." What can be spoken more plainly, than to say, that freely, without works, by faith only, we obtain remission of our sins? These and other like sentences, that we be justified by faith only, freely, and without works, we do read oft times in the most, best, and ancient writers: as, beside Hilary, Basil, and St. Ambrose, before rehearsed, we read the same in Origen, St. Chrysostom, St. Cyprian, St. Augustine, Prosper, Occumenius, Photius, Bernardus, Anselm, and many other authors, Greek and Latin. Nevertheless, this sentence, that we be justified by faith, only is not so meant of them, that the said justifying faith is alone in man, without true repentance, hope, charity, dread, and the fear of God, at any time or season. Nor when they say, that we be justified freely, do they mean that we should or might afterward be idle, and that nothing should be required on our parts afterward: neither do they mean so to be justified without our good works, that we should do no good works at all, like as shall be more expressed at large hereafter. But this saying that we be justified by faith only, freely, and without works, is spoken for to take away clearly all merit of our works, as being unable to deserve our justification at God's hands, and thereby most plainly to express the weakness of man, and the goodness of God; the great infirmity of ourselves; and the might and

power of God ; the imperfectness of our own works, and the most abundant grace of our Saviour Christ ; and therefore wholly to ascribe the merit and deserving of our justification unto Christ only, and his most precious blood-shedding. This faith the holy Scripture teacheth ; this is the strong rock and foundation of Christian religion ; this doctrine all old and ancient authors of Christ's church do approve : this doctrine advanceth and setteth forth the true glory of Christ, and beateth down the vain glory of man : this whosoever denieth, is not to be accounted for a Christian man, nor for a setter-forth of Christ's Gospel, but for an adversary to Christ and his Gospel, and for a setter-forth of men's vain-glory. And although this doctrine be never so true, (as it is most true indeed,) that we be justified freely, without all merit of our own good works, (as St. Paul doth express it,) and freely, by this lively and perfect faith in Christ only, (as the ancient authors used to speak it,) yet this true doctrine must be also truly understood, and most plainly declared, lest carnal men should take unjustly occasion thereby to live carnally, after the appetite and will of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. And because no man should err by mistaking of this doctrine, I shall plainly and shortly so declare the right understanding of the same, that no man shall justly think that he may thereby take any occasion of carnal liberty, to follow the desires of the flesh, or that thereby any kind of sin shall be committed, or any ungodly living the more used.

First, you shall understand, that in our justification by Christ it is not all one thing, the office of God unto man, and the office of man unto God. Justification is not the office of man, but of God ; man cannot make himself righteous by his own works, neither in part, nor in the whole ; for that were the greatest arrogancy and presumption of man that Antichrist could set up against God, to affirm that a man might by his own works take away and

purge his own sins, and so justify himself. But justification is the office of God only, and is not a thing which we render unto him, but which we receive of him : not which we give to him, but which we take of him, by his free mercy, and by the only merits of his most dearly beloved Son, our only Redeemer, Saviour, and Justifier, Jesus Christ. So that the true understanding of this doctrine, we be justified freely by faith without works, or that we be justified by faith in Christ only, is not, that this our own act to believe in Christ, or this our faith in Christ, which is within us, doth justify us, and deserve our justification unto us, (for that were to count ourselves to be justified by some act of virtue that is within ourselves;) but the true understanding and meaning thereof is, that although we hear God's word and believe it; although we have faith, hope, charity, repentance, dread, and fear of God within us, and do never so many good works thereunto; yet we must renounce the merit of all our said virtues, of faith, hope, charity, and all our other virtues and good deeds, which we either have done, shall do, or can do, as things that be far too weak and insufficient, and imperfect, to deserve remission of our sins, and our justification; and therefore we must trust only in God's mercy, and that sacrifice which our High Priest and Saviour Christ Jesus, the Son of God, once offered for us upon the cross, to obtain thereby God's grace and remission, as well of our original sin in baptism, as of all actual sin committed by us after our baptism, if we truly repent and turn unfeignedly to him again. So that, as St. John Baptist, although he were never so virtuous and godly a man, yet in this matter of forgiving of sin, he did put the people from him, and appointed them unto Christ, saying thus unto them, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*, John i.; even so, as great and as godly a virtue as the lively faith is, yet it putteth us from

itself, and remitteth or appointeth us unto Christ, for to have, only by him, remission of our sins, or justification. So that our faith in Christ (as it were) saith unto us thus: It is not I that take away your sins, but it is Christ only; and to him only I send you for that purpose, forsaking therein all your good virtues, words, thoughts, and works, and only putting your trust in Christ.

It hath been manifestly declared unto you, that no man can fulfil the Law of God; and therefore by the Law all men are condemned: whereupon it followed necessarily, that some other thing should be required for our salvation than the Law: and that is, a true and a lively faith in Christ; bringing forth good works, and a life according to God's commandments. And also you heard the ancient authors' minds of this saying, Faith in Christ only, justifieth man, so plainly declared, that you see, that the very true meaning of this proposition or saying, We be justified by faith in Christ only (according to the meaning of the old ancient authors) is this: We put our faith in Christ, that we be justified by him only, that we be justified by God's free mercy, and the merits of our Saviour Christ only, and by no virtue or good work of our own that is in us, or that we can be able to have, or to do, for to deserve the same; Christ himself only being the cause meritorious thereof.

Here you perceive many words to be used to avoid contention in words, with them that delight to brawl about words, and also to show the true meaning to avoid evil taking and misunderstanding; and yet peradventure all will not serve with them that be contentions: but contenders will ever forge matter of contention, even when they have none occasion thereto. Notwithstanding, such be the less to be passed upon, so that the rest may profit, which will be more desirous to know the truth, than (when it is plain enough) to contend about it, and with contentious and captious cavillation, to obscure and darken

it. Truth it is that our own works do not justify us, to speak properly of our justification ; that is to say, our works do not merit or deserve remission of our sins, and make us of unjust, just before God : but God of his mere mercy, through the only merits and deservings of his Son Jesus Christ, doth justify us. Nevertheless, because faith doth directly send us to Christ for remission of our sins, and that by faith given us of God, we embrace the promise of God's mercy, and of the remission of our sins, (which thing none other of our virtues, or works, properly doth,) therefore Scripture useth to say, that faith without works doth justify. And forasmuch as it is all one sentence in effect, to say faith without works, and only faith, doth justify us ; therefore the old ancient Fathers of the Church, from time to time, have uttered our justification with this speech ; Only faith justifieth us : meaning none other thing than St. Paul meant, when he said, *A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.* Gal. ii. And because all this is brought to pass through the only merits and deservings of our Saviour Christ, and not through our merits or through the merit of any virtue that we have within us, or of any work that cometh from us ; therefore in that respect of merit and deserving, we forsake, as it were, altogether again, faith, works, and all other virtues. For our own imperfection is so great, through the corruption of original sin, that all is imperfect that is within us, faith, charity, hope, dread, thoughts, words, and works, and therefore not apt to merit, and deserve, any part of our justification for us. And this form of speaking use we, in the humbling of ourselves to God, and to give all the glory to our Saviour Christ, who is best worthy to have it.

Here you have heard the office of God in our justification, and how we receive it of him freely, by his mercy, without our deserts, through true and lively faith. Now you shall hear the office and duty of a

Christian man unto God, what we ought on our part to render unto God again for his great mercy and goodness. Our office is, not to pass the time of this present life unfruitfully and idly, after that we are baptized or justified, not caring how few good works we do to the glory of God, and profit of our neighbours: much less is it our office, after that we be once made Christ's members, to live contrary to the same; making ourselves members of the Devil, walking after his enticements, and after the suggestions of the world and the flesh, whereby we know that we do serve the world and the Devil, and not God. For that faith which bringeth forth (without repentance) either evil works, or no good works, is not a right, pure, and lively faith, but a dead, devilish, counterfeit, and feigned faith, as St. Paul and St. James call it. For even the devils know, and believe, that Christ was born of a virgin: that he fasted forty days and forty nights without meat and drink; that he wrought all kind of miracles, declaring himself very God: they believe also that Christ for our sakes suffered a most painful death, to redeem us from everlasting death, and that he rose again from death the third day: they believe that he ascended into heaven, and that he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and at the last end of this world shall come again, and judge both the quick and the dead. These articles of our faith the devils believe, and so they believe all things that be written in the New and Old Testament to be true: and yet for all this faith they be but devils, remaining still in their damnable estate, lacking the very true Christian faith. For the right and true Christian faith is, not only to believe that holy Scripture, and all the foresaid articles of our faith are true; but also to have a sure trust and confidence in God's merciful promises, to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ: whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments. And this true Christian faith neither any devil hath, nor yet any man, which

in the outward profession of his ^{own} mouth, and in his outward receiving of the sacraments, in coming to the church, and in all other outward appearances seemeth to be a Christian man, and yet in his living and deeds sheweth the contrary. For how can a man have this true faith, this sure trust and confidence in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins be forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God, and to be partaker of the kingdom of heaven by Christ, when he liveth ungodlily, and denieth Christ in his deeds? Surely no such ungodly man can have this faith and trust in God. For as they know Christ to be the only Saviour of the world; so they know also that wicked men shall not enjoy the kingdom of God. They know that God hateth unrighteousness: that he will destroy all those that speak untruly; that those that have done good works (which cannot be done without a lively faith in Christ) shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil shall come unto the resurrection of judgment. Very well they know also, that to them that be contentious, and to them that will not be obedient unto the truth, but will obey unrighteousness, shall come indignation, wrath, and affliction, &c. Therefore to conclude, considering the infinite benefits of God, showed and given unto us mercifully without our deserts, who hath not only created us of nothing, and from a piece of vile clay, of his infinite goodness hath exalted us, as touching our soul, unto his own similitude and likeness; but also, whereas we were condemned to hell, and death everlasting, hath given his own Son, being God eternal, immortal, and equal unto himself in power and glory, to be incarnated, and to take our mortal nature upon him, with the infirmities of the same, and in the same nature to suffer most shameful and painful death for our offences, to the intent to justify us, and restore us to life everlasting: so making us also his dear children, brethren unto his only Son our Saviour Christ, and

inheritors for ever, with him, of his eternal kingdom of heaven.

These great and merciful benefits of God, if they be well considered, do neither minister unto us occasion to be idle, and to live without doing any good works, neither yet stir us up by any means to do evil things; but contrariwise, if we be not desperate persons, and our hearts harder than stones, they move us to render ourselves unto God wholly, with all our will, hearts, might, and power to serve him in all good deeds, obeying his commandments during our lives, to seek in all things his glory and honour, not our sensual pleasures and vain glory; evermore dreading willingly to offend such a merciful God and loving Redeemer, in word, thought or deed. And the same benefits of God, deeply considered, move us for his sake also to be ever ready to give ourselves to our neighbours, and as much as lieth in us, to study with all our endeavours to do good to every man. These be the fruits of the true faith, to do good as much as lieth in us to every man, and above all things, and in all things, to advance the glory of God, of whom only we have our sanctification, justification, salvation, and redemption: to whom be ever glory, praise, and honour, world without end. *Amen.*

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A SUMMARY
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FOR THE
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OF THE
CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

Designed chiefly for the Use of Young Persons; more particularly
of those who have lately been confirmed in the
Diocese of London.

BY THE
RIGHT REV. BEILBY PORTEUS, D.D.
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A
SUMMARY
OF THE
PRINCIPAL EVIDENCES,
&c.

THE method I intend to pursue in this Treatise, is to present to my young readers the following Series of Propositions, and then to prove distinctly the truth of each.

I. From considering the state of the heathen world, before the appearance of our Lord upon earth, it is evident that there was an absolute necessity for the revelation of God's will, and, of course, a great probability beforehand that such a revelation would be granted.

II. At the very time when there was a general expectation in the world of some extraordinary personage making his appearance in it, a person called Jesus Christ did actually appear on earth, asserting that he was the Son of God, and that he was sent from heaven to teach mankind true religion; and he did accordingly found a religion, which from him was called the Christian Religion, and which has been professed by great numbers of people from that time to the present.

III. The books of the New Testament were written by those persons to whom they are ascribed, and con-

tain a faithful history of Christ and his religion; and the account there given of both, may be securely relied upon as strictly true.

IV. The Scriptures of the Old Testament (which are connected with those of the New) are the genuine writings of those whose names they bear; and give a true account of the Mosaic dispensation, of the historical facts, the divine commands, the moral precepts, and the prophecies which they contain.

V. The character of Christ, as represented in the Gospels, affords very strong grounds for believing that he was a divine person.

VI. The sublimity of his doctrines, and the purity of his moral precepts, confirm this belief.

VII. The rapid and successful propagation of the Gospel by the first teachers of it, through a large part of the world, is a proof that they were favored with divine assistance and support.

VIII. A comparison betwixt Christ and Mahomet, and their respective religions, leads us to conclude, that as the religion of the latter was confessedly the invention of man, that of the former was derived from God.

IX. The predictions delivered by the ancient prophets, and fulfilled in our Saviour, show that he was the Messiah expected by the Jews, and that he came into the world by divine appointment, to be the great deliverer and redeemer of mankind.

X. The prophecies delivered by our Saviour himself prove that he was endued with the foreknowledge of future events, which belongs only to God, and to those inspired by him.

XI. The miracles performed by our Lord demonstrated him to have possessed divine power.

XII. The resurrection of our Lord from the dead, is a fact fully proved by the clearest evidence, and is the seal and confirmation of his divinity, and of the truth of his religion.

These are the several points I shall undertake to

prove in the following pages: and if these are clearly made out, there can be nothing more wanting to satisfy every reasonable man, that the Christian Religion is a true revelation from God.

PROPOSITION I.

From considering the state of the heathen world, before the appearance of our Lord upon earth, it is evident that there was an absolute necessity for a Divine Revelation of God's Will, and, of course, a great probability beforehand that such a Revelation would be granted.

THEY who are acquainted with ancient history know perfectly well that there is no one fact more certain and more notorious than this: that for many ages before our Saviour appeared upon earth, and at the time he actually did appear, the whole heathen world, even the politest and most civilized and most learned nations, were, with a very few exceptions, sunk in the most deplorable ignorance of every thing relating to God and to religion; in the grossest superstition and idolatry, and in the most abominable corruption and depravity of manners. They neither understood the true nature of God nor the attributes and perfections which belong to him, nor the worship that was acceptable to him, nor the moral duties which he required from his creatures; nor had they any clear notions or firm belief of the immortality of the soul, and a state of rewards and punishments in another life. They believed the world to be under the direction of a vast multitude of gods and goddesses, to whom they ascribed the worst passions and the worst vices that ever disgraced human nature. They wor-

shipped also dead men and women, birds and beasts, insects and reptiles, (especially that most odious and disgusting reptile, the serpent) together with an infinite number of idols, the work of their own hands, from various materials, gold, silver, wood and stone. With respect to their own conduct, they were almost universally addicted to the most shocking and abominable vices: even many of their solemn religious ceremonies and acts of devotion were scenes of the grossest sensuality and licentiousness. Others of them were attended with the most savage and cruel superstitious, and sometimes even with human sacrifices.

The description given of the ancient Pagans by St. Paul, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, is strictly and literally true. "They were filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, uncleanness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things; disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."

These are not the mere general declamations of a pious man against the wickedness of the times; they are faithful and exact pictures of the manners of the age, and they are fully and amply confirmed by contemporary heathen writers. They are applied also to a people highly civilized, ingenious, learned, and celebrated for their proficiency in all liberal arts and sciences. What, then, must have been the depravity of the most barbarous nations, when such were the morals of the most polite and virtuous?

There were, it is true, among all the ancient nations, and especially among the Greeks and Romans, some wise and comparatively good men, called philosophers, who had juster notions of morality and religion than the rest of the world, and preserved themselves to a certain degree unpolluted by the

general corruption of the times. But these were few in proportion to the great bulk of mankind, and were utterly unable to produce any considerable change in the prevailing principles and manners of their countrymen. They themselves had but very imperfect and erroneous notions respecting the nature and attributes of God, the worship he required, the duties and obligations of morality, the method of God's governing the world, his design in creating mankind, the original dignity of human nature, the state of corruption and depravity into which it afterwards fell, the particular mode of divine interposition necessary for the recovery of the human race, the means of regaining the favour of their offended Maker, and the glorious end to which God intended finally to conduct them. Even with respect to those great and important doctrines above mentioned, the immortality of the soul, the reality of a future state, and the distribution of rewards and punishments hereafter, they were full of doubt, uncertainty, and hesitation: and rather ardently wished and hoped for, than confidently expected and believed them. But even what they *did* know with any degree of clearness and certainty, they either would not condescend, or wanted the ability, to render plain and intelligible to the lower orders of the people. They were destitute also of proper authority to enforce the virtues they recommended; they had no motives to propose powerful enough to over-rule strong temptations and corrupt inclinations: their own example, instead of recommending their precepts, tended to counteract them; for it was generally (even in the very best of them) in direct opposition to their doctrines; and the detestable vices to which many of them were addicted, entirely destroyed the efficacy of what they taught.

Above all, they were destitute of those awful sanctions of religion, which are the most effectual restraints on the passions and vices of mankind, and the

most powerful incentives to virtue—the rewards and punishments of a future state; which form so essential and important a part of the Christian dispensation.

There was, therefore, a plain and absolute necessity for a divine revelation, to rescue mankind from that gulf of ignorance, superstition, idolatry, wickedness, and misery, in which they were almost universally sunk; to teach them in what manner, and with what kind of external service, God might most acceptably be worshipped, and what expiation he would accept for sin; to give them a full assurance of a future state and a future judgment; to make the whole doctrine of religion clear and obvious to all capacities; to add weight and authority to the plainest precepts, and to furnish men with extraordinary and supernatural assistance, to enable them to overcome the corruptions of their nature. And since it was so plainly worthy of God, and consonant to all our ideas of his goodness, mercy, and compassion to the work of his own hands, that he should thus enlighten, and assist, and direct the creatures he has made, there was evidently much ground to expect that such information and assistance would be granted; and the wisest of the ancient heathens themselves thought it most natural and agreeable to right reason to hope for something of this nature.

You may give over, says Socrates, all hopes of amending men's manners for the future, unless God be pleased to send you some other person to instruct you¹; and Plato declares, that whatever is right, and as it should be, in the present evil state of the world, can be so only by the *particular interposition of God*². Cicero has made similar declarations; and Porphyry, who was a most inveterate enemy to the Christian religion, yet confesses, that there was wanting *some universal method of delivering men's*

¹ Plato in Apolog. Socratis:

² Plato de Rep.

*souls which no sect of philosophy had ever yet found out*¹.

These confessions of the great sages of antiquity infinitely outweigh the assertion of our modern infidels, "that human reason is fully sufficient to teach man his duty, and enable him to perform it; and that, therefore, a divine revelation was perfectly needless." It is true, that, in the present time, a Deist may have tolerably just notions of the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being, of the worship due to him, of the ground and extent of moral obligation, and even of a future state of retribution. But from whence does he derive these notions? Not from the dictates of his own unassisted reason, but (as the philosophist Rousseau himself confesses²) from those very Scriptures which he despises and reviles, from the early impressions of education, from living and conversing in a Christian country, where those doctrines are publicly taught, and where, in spite of himself, he imbibes some portion of that religious knowledge which the Sacred Writings have everywhere diffused and communicated to the *enemies* as well as to the friends of the Gospel. But they who were destitute of these advantages, they who had nothing but reason to direct them, and therefore knew what reason is capable of doing, when left to itself, much better than any modern infidel (who never was, and never can be, precisely in the same predicament); these men uniformly declare, that the mere light of nature was *not* competent to conduct them into the road of happiness and virtue; and that the only *sure and certain guide* to carry them well through this life, *was a divine discovery of truth*³. These considerations may serve to show, that, instead of entertaining any unreasonable prejudices beforehand against the possibility or

¹ Augustin. de Civitate Dei, l. 10. c. 32.

² Vol. ix. p. 71. 12mo. 1764.

³ Plato in Phædone.

probability of any divine revelation whatever, we ought, on the contrary, to be previously prepossessed in favour of it, and to be prepared and open to receive it with candour and fairness, whenever it should come supported with sufficient evidence; because from considering the wants of man and the mercy of God, it appears highly probable that such a revelation would, *some time or other*, be vouchsafed to mankind.

PROPOSITION II.

At the very time when there was a general expectation in the world of some extraordinary personage making his appearance in it, a person called Jesus Christ did actually appear upon earth, asserting that he was the Son of God, and that he came from heaven to teach mankind true religion; and he did accordingly found a religion, which from him was called the Christian Religion, and which has been professed by great numbers of people from that time to the present.

It was necessary just to state this proposition, as the foundation of all the reasoning that is to follow: but the truth of it is so universally acknowledged, that it requires but very few words to be said in support of it.

That there was, about the time of our Saviour's birth, a general expectation spread over the eastern part of the world, that some very extraordinary person would appear in Judea, is very evident both from

the Sacred History and from Pagan writers. St. Matthew informs us, that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, there came wise men (probably men of considerable rank and learning in their own country) from the East, saying, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews; for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him?" In confirmation of this, two Roman historians, Suetonius and Tacitus, assert, that there prevailed at that time, over the whole East, an ancient and fixed opinion, that there should arise out of Judea a person who should obtain dominion over the world.

That at this time, when Augustus Cæsar was emperor of Rome, a person called Jesus Christ was actually born in Judea, that he professed to come from heaven to teach mankind true religion, and that he had a multitude of followers, the sacred historians unanimously affirm: and several heathen authors also bear testimony to the same facts. They mention the very name of Christ, and acknowledge that he had a great number of disciples, who from him were called Christians. The Jews, though professed enemies to our religion, acknowledge these things to be true; and none even of the earliest Pagans, who wrote against Christianity, ever pretended to question their reality. These things, therefore, are as certain and undeniable as ancient history, both sacred and profane, and the concurrent testimony both of friends and enemies, can possibly make them.

PROPOSITION III.

The books of the New Testament were written by those persons to whom they are ascribed, and contain a faithful history of Christ and his religion; and the account there given of both may be securely relied upon as strictly true.

THE Books which contain the history of Christ, and of the Christian Religion, are the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. That the Gospels were written by the persons whose names they bear, namely, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, there is no more reason to doubt, than that the histories which we have under the names of Xenophon, Livy, or Tacitus, were written by those authors.

A great many passages are alluded to or quoted from the Evangelists, exactly as we read them now, by a regular succession of Christian writers, from the time of the Apostles down to this hour; and at a very early period their names are mentioned as the authors of their respective Gospels; which is more than can be said for any other ancient historian whatever¹.

These books have always been considered, by the whole Christian world, from the Apostolic age, as containing a faithful history of their religion, and therefore they ought to be received as such: just as we allow the Koran to contain a genuine account of the Mahometan religion, and the sacred books of the Brahmins to contain a true representation of the Hindoo religion.

That all the facts related in these writings, and the

¹ Lardner's Credibility, b. 1. and Paley's Evidences, vol. i.

accounts given of every thing our Saviour said and did, are also strictly true, we have the most substantial grounds for believing.

For, in the first place, the writers had the very best means of information, and could not possibly be deceived themselves.

And, in the next place, they could have no conceivable inducement for imposing upon others.

St. Matthew and St. John were two of our Lord's Apostles; his constant companions and attendants throughout the whole of his ministry. They were actually present at the scenes which they describe; eye-witnesses of the facts, and ear-witnesses of the discourses which they relate.

St. Mark and St. Luke, though not themselves Apostles, yet were the contemporaries and companions of Apostles, and in habits of society and friendship with those who had been present at the transactions which they record. St. Luke expressly says this in the beginning of his Gospel, which opens with these words: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed amongst us; even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were *eye-witnesses, and ministers of the Word*, it seemed good to me also, *having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first*, to write unto thee, in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the *certainly* of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." St. Luke also being the author of the Acts of the Apostles, we have, for the writers of these five books, persons who had the most *perfect knowledge* of every thing they relate, either from their own personal observation, or from immediate communication with those who saw and heard every thing that passed.

They could not, therefore, be themselves deceived; nor could they have the least inducement, or the least inclination, to deceive others.

They were plain, honest, artless, unlearned men, in very humble occupations of life, and utterly incapable of inventing or carrying on such a refined and complicated system of fraud, as the Christian religion must have been, if it was not true. There are, besides, the strongest marks of fairness, candour, simplicity, and truth, throughout the whole of their narratives. Their greatest enemies have never attempted to throw the least stain upon their characters; and how then can they be supposed capable of so gross an imposition as that of asserting and propagating the most impudent fiction? They could gain by it neither pleasure, profit, nor power. On the contrary, it brought upon them the most dreadful evils, and even death itself. If, therefore, they were cheats, they were cheats without any motive, and without any advantage: nay, contrary to every motive and every advantage that usually influence the actions of men. They preached a religion which forbids falsehood under pain of eternal punishment, and yet, on this supposition, they supported that religion by falsehood; and, whilst they were guilty of the basest and most ascle's knavery themselves, they were taking infinite pains, and going through the greatest labour and suffering, in order to teach honesty to all mankind.

Is this credible? Is this possible? Is not this a mode of acting so contrary to all experience, to all the principles of human nature, and to all the usual motives of human conduct, as to exceed the utmost bounds of belief, and to compel every reasonable man to reject at once so monstrous a supposition?

The facts, therefore, related in the Gospels, and in the Acts of the Apostles, even those evidently miraculous, *must* be true; for the testimony of those who *die* for what they assert, is evidence sufficient to support any miracle whatever. And this opinion of their veracity is strongly confirmed by the following considerations.

There are, in all the sacred writings of the New Testament, continual allusions and references to things, persons, places, manners, customs, and opinions, which are found to be perfectly conformable to the real state of things, at that time, as represented by disinterested and contemporary writers. Had their story been a forgery, they would certainly have been detected in some mistake or other, concerning these incidental circumstances, which yet they have never once been.

Then, as to the facts themselves which they relate, great numbers of them are mentioned and related both by Jewish and Roman historians; such as the star that appeared at our Saviour's birth, the journey of the wise men to Bethlehem, Herod's murder of the infants under two years old, many particulars concerning John the Baptist and Herod, the crucifixion of our Lord under Pontius Pilate, and the earthquake and miraculous darkness which attended it. Nay, even many of the miracles which Jesus himself wrought, particularly the curing the lame and blind, and casting out devils, are, as to the *matter of fact*, expressly owned and admitted, by several of the earliest and most implacable enemies of Christianity. For though they ascribed these miracles to the assistance of evil spirits, yet they allowed that the miracles themselves were actually wrought¹.

This testimony of our adversaries, even to the miraculous parts of the sacred history, is the strongest possible confirmation of the truth and authority of the whole.

It is also certain that the books of the New Testament have come down to the present times without any material alteration or corruption; and that they are, in all essential points, the same as they came from the hands of their authors.

That in the various transcripts of these writings,

¹ Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion.

as in all other ancient books, a few letters, syllables, or even words, may have been changed, we do not pretend to deny: but that there has been any designed or fraudulent corruption of any considerable part, especially of any doctrine, or any important passage of history, no one has ever attempted, or been able to prove. Indeed it was absolutely impossible. There can be no doubt but that, as soon as many of the original writings came out of the hands of their authors, great numbers of copies were immediately taken, and sent to all the different Christian churches. We know that they were publicly read in the religious assemblies of the first Christians. We know, also, that they were very soon translated into a variety of foreign languages, and these ancient versions (many of which still remain) were quickly dispersed into all parts of the known world; nay, even several of the original manuscripts remained to the time of Tertullian, at the end of the second century¹. There are numberless quotations from every part of the New Testament by Christian writers, from the earliest ages down to the present, all which substantially agree with the present text of the Sacred Writings. Besides which, a variety of sects and heresies soon arose in the Christian Church, and each of these appealed to the Scriptures for the truth of their doctrines. It would, therefore, have been utterly impossible for any one sect to have made any material alteration in the sacred books, without being immediately detected and exposed by all the others². Their mutual jealousy and suspicion of each other would effectually prevent any gross adulteration of the sacred volumes; and with respect to lesser matters, the best and most able critics have, after the most minute examination, asserted and proved, that the holy Scriptures of the New Testament have suffered less from the injury of time, and

¹ Grotius de Ver. l. 3. f. 2.² Beattie, vo. i. p. 188.

the errors of transcribers, than any other ancient writings whatsoever¹.

PROPOSITION IV.

The Scriptures of the Old Testament, which are connected with those of the New, are the genuine writings of those whose names they bear, and give a true account of the Mosaic Dispensation, as well as of the historical facts, the divine commands, the moral precepts, and the prophecies, which they contain.

THAT part of the Bible which is called the Old Testament contains a great variety of very different compositions, some historical, some poetical, some moral and preceptive, some prophetical; written at different times, and by different persons, and collected into one volume by the care of the Jews.

That these books were all written by those whose names they bear, there is not the least reasonable ground to doubt; they have been always considered as the writings of those persons by the whole Jewish nation (who were most interested in their authenti-

¹ The style, too, of the Gospel, (says the amiable and elegant author of the *Minstrel*) bears intrinsic evidence of its truth. We find there no appearance of artifice or of party spirit; no attempt to exaggerate on the one hand, or depreciate on the other; no remarks thrown in to anticipate objections; nothing of that caution which never fails to distinguish the testimony of those who are conscious of imposture; no endeavour to reconcile the reader's mind to what may be extraordinary in the narrative; all is fair, candid, and simple. The historians make no reflections of their own, but confine themselves to matter of fact, that is, to what they heard or saw; and honestly record their own mistakes and faults, as well as the other particulars of the story. *Beattie's Evidences*, vol. i. p. 89.

city, and most likely to know the truth,) from the earliest times down to the present; and no proof to the contrary has ever yet been produced.

That these writings have come down to us in the same state in which they were originally written, as to all essential points, there is every reason to believe. The original manuscripts were long preserved among the Jews. A copy of the book of the law was preserved in the ark; it was ordered to be read publicly every seven years, at the feast of the tabernacles, as well as privately, and frequently, in every Jewish family.

There is a copy still extant of the five books of Moses (which are called the Pentateuch,) taken by the Samaritans, who were bitter enemies to the Jews, and always at variance with them; and this copy agrees, in every material instance, with the Jewish copy.

Near three hundred years before Christ, these Scriptures were translated into Greek, and this version (called the Septuagint) agrees also in all essential articles with the Hebrew original. This being very widely spread over the world rendered any considerable alteration extremely difficult; and the dispersion of the Jews into all the different regions of the globe made it next to impossible.

The Jews were always remarkable for being most faithful guardians of their sacred books, which they transcribed repeatedly, and compared most carefully with the originals, and of which they even numbered the words and letters. That they have not corrupted any of their prophetic writings appears from hence; that we prove Jesus to be the Messiah from many of those very prophecies which they have themselves preserved; and which (if their invincible fidelity to their sacred books had not restrained them) their hatred to Christianity would have led them to alter or to suppress. And their credit is still further established by this circumstance, that our Saviour,

though he brings many heavy charges against the Scribes and Pharisees, yet never once accuses them of corrupting or falsifying any one of their sacred writings.

It is no less certain that these writings give a true and faithful account of the various matters which they contain. Many of the principal facts and circumstances related in them are mentioned by the most ancient heathen authors. The first origin and creation of the world out of chaos, as described by Moses; the formation of the sun, the moon, and the stars, and afterwards of man himself; the dominion given him over other animals; the completion of this great work in six days; the destruction of the world by a deluge; the circumstances of the ark and the dove; the punishment of Sodom by fire; the ancient rite of circumcision; many particulars relating to Moses, the giving of the law, and the Jewish ritual; the names of David and Solomon, and their leagues with the Tyrians; these things, and many others of the same sort, are expressly mentioned, or plainly alluded to, in several Pagan authors of the highest antiquity and the best credit. And a very bitter enemy of the Jews, as well as Christians, the emperor Julian, is, by the force of evidence, compelled to confess, that there were many persons among the Jews divinely inspired; and that fire from heaven descended on the sacrifices of Moses and Elijah. Add to this, that the references made to the books of the Old Testament, and the passages quoted from them by our Saviour and his Apostles, is a plain proof that they acknowledge the authority of those writings, and the veracity of their authors.

It is true, indeed, that in the historical books of the Old Testament, there are some bad characters and bad actions recorded, and some very cruel deeds described; but these things are mentioned as mere historical facts, and by no means approved or proposed

as examples to others. And excepting these passages, which are comparatively few in number, the rest of those sacred books, more especially Deuteronomy, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Prophets, are full of very sublime representations of God and his attributes, of very excellent rules for the conduct of life, and examples of almost every virtue that can adorn human nature. And these things were written at a time when all the rest of the world, even the wisest and most learned, and most celebrated nations of the earth, were sunk in the grossest ignorance of God and religion, were worshipping idols and brute beasts, and indulging themselves in the most abominable vices. It is a most singular circumstance, that a people in a remote, obscure corner of the world, very inferior to several heathen nations in learning, in philosophy, in genius, in science, and all the polite arts, should yet be so infinitely their superiors in their idea of the Supreme Being, and in every thing relating to morality and religion. This can no otherwise be accounted for, than on the supposition of their having been instructed in these things by God himself, or by persons commissioned and inspired by him; that is, of their having been really favoured with those divine revelations, which are recorded in the books of the Old Testament.

With respect to the prophecies which they contain, the truth of a great part of these has been infallibly proved by the exact fulfilment of them in subsequent ages, such as those relating to our Saviour (which will be hereafter specified), to Babylon, to Egypt, to Edom, to Tyre and Sidon. But those which refer more particularly to the dispersion of the Jews are so very numerous and clear, and the accomplishment of them in the present state of the Jews, is a fact which obtrudes itself, at this moment, so irresistibly upon our senses, that I cannot forbear presenting to the reader some of the most remark-

able of those predictions, as they are drawn together by a most able writer.

It was foretold by Moses, that when the Jews forsook the true God, "they should be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, should be scattered among the heathen, among all the people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; should become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations; and that among those nations they should find no ease, neither should the sole of their foot have rest; but the Lord should give them a trembling heart, and fading of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and send a faintness into their hearts in the land of their enemies: so that the sound of a shaken leaf should chase them¹."

The same things are continually predicted through all the following prophets: "That God would disperse them through the countries of the heathen; that he would sift them among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve; that in all the kingdoms of the earth, whither they should be driven, they should be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, and an astonishment and a hissing; and that they should abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim²."

Had any thing like this, in the time of Moses or of the Prophets, ever happened to any nation in the world? Or was there in nature any probability that any such thing should ever happen to any people? That when they were conquered by their enemies and led into captivity, they should neither continue in the place of their captivity, nor be swallowed up and lost among their conquerors, but be scattered among all the nations of the world, and hated and persecuted

¹ Deut. xxviii. 25; Lev. xxvi. 33; Deut. iv. 27; Deut. xxviii. 64; Deut. xxviii. 37; Deut. xxviii. 65; Lev. xxvi. 36.

² Ezek. xx. 13; xi. 15; Amos ix. 9; Jer. xxiv. 9; xxix. 18; Hosea iii. 4.

by all nations for many ages, and yet continue a distinct people? Or could any description of the Jews written at this day, be a more exact and lively picture of the state they have now been in for many ages, than these prophetic descriptions, especially that of Moses, given more than 3000 years ago¹!

PROPOSITION V.

The character of Christ, as represented in the Gospel, affords very strong grounds for believing that he was a Divine Person.

WHOEVER considers with attention the character of our blessed Lord, as it may be collected from the various incidents and actions of his life (for there are no laboured descriptions in it, no encomiums upon it, by his own disciples), will soon discover that it was, in every respect, the most perfect that ever was made known to mankind. If we only say of him what even Pilate said of him, and what his bitterest enemies cannot and do not deny, *that we can find no fault in him*, and that the whole tenor of his life was entirely blameless throughout, this is more than can be said of any other person that ever came into the world. But this is going a very little way indeed in the excellence of his character. He was not only free from every failing, but possessed and practised every imaginable virtue. Towards his heavenly Father he expressed the most ardent love, the most fervent yet rational devotion, and displayed in his whole conduct the most absolute resignation to his will, and obedience to his commands. His manners were gentle, mild, condescending, and gracious; his heart overflowed with kindness, compassion, and tenderness to the whole human race.

¹ Clark's Evidences, p. 176, 177.

The great employment of his life was to do good to the bodies and souls of men. In this all his thoughts and all his time were constantly and almost incessantly occupied. He went about dispensing his blessings to all around him, in a thousand different ways; healing diseases, relieving infirmities, correcting errors, removing prejudices, promoting piety, justice, charity, peace, harmony among men, and crowding into the narrow compass of his ministry, more acts of mercy and compassion than the longest life of the most benevolent man upon earth ever yet produced. Over his own passions he had obtained the most complete command; and, though his patience was continually put to the severest trials, yet he was never once overcome, never once betrayed into any intemperance or excess, in word or deed, "never once spake unadvisedly with his lips." He endured the cruellest insults from his enemies with the utmost composure, meekness, patience, and resignation; displayed the most astonishing fortitude under a most painful and ignominious death; and, to crown all, in the very midst of his torments on the cross, implored forgiveness for his murderers in that divinely charitable prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Nor was his wisdom inferior to his virtues. The doctrines he taught were the most sublime and the most important that were ever before delivered to mankind, and every way worthy of that God, from whom he professed to derive them, and whose Son he declared himself to be.

His precepts inculcated the purest and most perfect morality; his discourses were full of dignity and wisdom, yet intelligible and clear; his parables conveyed instruction in the most pleasing, familiar, and impressive manner; and his answers to the many insidious questions that were put to him, showed uncommon quickness of conception, soundness of

judgment, and presence of mind, completely baffled all the artifices and malice of his enemies, and enabled him to elude all the snares that were laid for him. It appears then, even from this short and imperfect sketch of our Saviour's character, that he was, even beyond comparison, the wisest and most virtuous person that ever appeared; and even his bitterest enemies allow that he was so. If, then, he was confessedly so great and so good a man, it unavoidably follows that he must be, what he pretended to be, a divine person, and of course his religion also must be divine: for he certainly laid claim to a divine original. He asserted that he was the Son of God; and that he and his religion came from heaven; and that he had the power of working miracles. If this was not the case, he must, in a matter of infinite importance, have asserted what had no foundation in truth. But is such a supposition as this in the smallest degree credible? Is it probable, is it conceivable, is it consistent with the general conduct of man, is it reconcileable with the acknowledged character of our Lord, to suppose, that any thing *but* truth could proceed from him, whom his very enemies allow to have been in *every* respect (and of course in point of veracity) the best and most virtuous of men? Was it ever known, is there a single instance to be produced in the history of mankind, of any one so unblemished in morals as Christ confessedly was, persisting for so great a length of time as he did in assertions, which, if untrue, would be repugnant to the clearest principles of morality, and most fatal in their consequences to those he loved best, his followers and his friends? Is it possible, that the pure, the upright, the pious, the devout, the meek, the gentle, the humane, the merciful Jesus, could engage multitudes of innocent and virtuous people in the belief and support of a religion which he knew must draw on them persecution, misery, and

death, unless he had been authorized by God himself to establish that religion; and unless he was conscious that he possessed the power of amply recompensing those who preferred his religion to every other consideration? The common sense and common feelings of mankind must revolt at such a preposterous idea.

It follows then, that Christ was, in truth, a divine teacher, and his religion the gift of God.

PROPOSITION VI.

The sublimity of our Lord's doctrines, and the purity of his moral precepts, confirm the belief of his Divine Mission.

THERE is no where to be found such important information, and such just and noble sentiments, concerning God and religion, as in the Scriptures of the New Testament.

They teach us, in the first place, that there is one Almighty Being, who created all things, of infinite power, wisdom, justice, mercy, goodness; that he is the governor and preserver of this world, which he has made; that his providential care is over all his works; and that he more particularly regards the affairs and conduct of men. They teach us, that we are to worship this great Being in spirit and in truth; and that the love of him is the first and great commandment, the source and spring of all virtue. They teach us more particularly how to pray to him, and for that purpose supply us with a form of prayer, called the Lord's Prayer, "which is a model of calm and rational devotion, and which, for its conciseness, its clearness, its suitableness to

every condition, and for the weight, solemnity, and real importance of its petitions, is without an equal or a rival¹." They teach us, moreover, what we all feel to be true, that the human heart is weak and corrupt; that man is fallen from his original innocence; that he is restored, however, to the favour of God, and the capacity of happiness, by the death and mediation and atonement of CHRIST, who is the way, the truth, and the life: and that he will be assisted in his sincere, though imperfect, endeavours after holiness, by the influence of God's holy Spirit.

They assure us, in fine, that the soul does not perish with the body. but shall pass, after death, into another world: that all mankind shall rise from the grave, and stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, who shall reward the virtuous, and punish the wicked, in a future and eternal state of existence, according to their deserts.

These are great, and interesting, and momentous truths, either wholly unknown, or but very imperfectly known to the world before: and they render the meanest peasant in this country better acquainted with the nature of the Supreme Being, and the relation in which we stand to him. than were any of the greatest sages of ancient times.

Equally excellent, and superior to all other rules of life, are the moral precepts of the Gospel.

Our divine Master, in the first place, laid down two great leading principles for our conduct, love to God, and love to mankind; and thence deducted (as occasions offered and incidents occurred, which gave peculiar force and energy to his instructions) all the principal duties towards God, our neighbour, and ourselves.

With respect to God, we are commanded to love, fear, worship, and obey him; to set him always before us; to do all things to his glory; to seek first

¹ Paley.

his kingdom and his righteousness; to resign ourselves wholly to his pleasure, and submit, with patience, cheerfulness, and resignation, to every thing he sees fit to bring upon us.

With regard to our neighbour, we are to exercise towards him the duties of charity, justice, equity, and truth; we are to love him as ourselves, and to do unto all men as we would they should do unto us; a most admirable rule, which comprehends the sum and substance of all social virtue, and which no man can mistake.

As to those duties which concern ourselves, we are commanded to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, to be temperate in all things, to keep under our body, and bring it into subjection, to preserve an absolute command over all our passions, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

These are the general directions given for our conduct in the various situations and relations of life. More particular injunctions are given in various parts of Scripture, especially in our Saviour's admirable sermon from the Mount, where we find a multitude of most excellent rules of life—short, sententious, solemn, and important, full of wisdom and dignity, yet intelligible and clear. But the principal excellence of the Gospel morality, and that which gives it an infinite superiority over all other moral instructions, is this; that it prefers a meek, yielding, complying, forgiving temper, to that violent, overbearing, inflexible, imperious disposition, which prevails so much in the world; that it regulates, not merely our actions, but our affections and our inclinations; and places the check to licentiousness exactly where it ought to be, that is, on the heart: that it forbids us to covet the praise of men in our devotions, our alms, and all our other virtues: that it gives leading rules and principles for all the relative duties of life; of husbands and wives, of parents and children, of masters and servants, of Christian

teachers and their disciples; of governors and subjects: that it commands us to be, as it were, lights in the world, and examples of good to all; to injure no man, but to bear injuries patiently; never to seek revenge, but to return good for evil; to love our very enemies, and to forgive others as we hope to be forgiven; to raise our thoughts and views above the present life, and to fix our affections principally on that which is to come.

But besides all this, the *manner* in which our Lord delivered all his doctrines and all his precepts; the concise, sententious, solemn, weighty maxims into which he generally compressed them; the easy, familiar, natural, pathetic parables in which he sometimes clothed them; that divine authority, and those awful sanctions with which he enforced them; these circumstances give a weight, and dignity, and importance to the precepts of Holy Writ, which no other moral rules can boast.

If now we ask, as it is very natural to ask, who that extraordinary person could be, that was the author of such uncommonly excellent morality as this? the answer is, that he was, to all outward appearances, the reputed son of a carpenter, living with his father and mother in a remote and obscure corner of the world, until the time that he assumed his public character. "Whence, then, had this man these things, and what wisdom is this that was given unto him?" He had evidently none of the usual means or opportunities of cultivating his understanding, or improving his mind. He was born in a low and indigent condition, without education, without learning, without any ancient stores from whence to draw his wisdom and morality, that were at all likely to fall into his hands. You may, perhaps, in some of the Greek or Roman writers, pick out a few of his precepts, or something like them. But what does this avail? Those writers he had never read. He had never studied at Athens or at Rome; he had no knowledge of orators or phi-

losophers. He understood, probably, no language but his own, and had nothing to give him juster notions of virtue and religion, than the rest of his countrymen and persons in his humble rank of life usually have. His fellow-labourers in this undertaking, the persons who assisted him during his life, and into whose hands his religion came after his death, were a few fishermen on the Lake of Tiberias, as unlearned and uneducated, and, for the purpose of framing rules of morality, as unpromising as himself. Is it possible, then, that such men as these could, without any assistance whatever, produce such perfect and incomparable rules of life as those of the Gospel; so greatly superior in purity, solidity, perspicuity, and universal usefulness, to all the moral lessons of all the philosophers upon earth put together? Every man of common sense must see that this is absolutely impossible; and that there is no other conceivable way of accounting for this, than by admitting what these persons constantly affirmed, that their doctrines and their precepts came from the fountain of all perfection; that is, from God himself.

PROPOSITION VII.

The rapid and successful propagation of the Gospel by the first teachers of it through a large part of the world, is a proof that they were favoured with Divine assistance and support.

WE find, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in their Epistles, that the number of converts to the Christian Religion began to increase considerably, almost immediately after our Saviour's ascension, and con-

tinued increasing to an astonishing degree through every age, until the final establishment of Christianity by Constantine. The first assembly which we meet with of Christ's disciples, and a few days after his removal from the world, consisted of 120¹. About a week after this, 3000 were added in one day²; and the number of Christians publicly baptized, and publicly associating together, were very soon increased to 5000³. In a few years after this, the converts were described as increasing in great numbers, in great multitudes, and even in myriads, tens of thousands⁴; and multitudes both of men and women continued to be added daily: so that, within about thirty years after our Lord's death, the Gospel was spread, not only throughout almost all parts of the Roman Empire, but even to Parthia and India. It appears, from the Epistles written to several churches by the Apostles, that there were large congregations of Christians, both at Rome and in all the principal cities of Greece and Asia. This account is confirmed by contemporary Roman historians: and Pliny, about eighty years after the Ascension, complains that this *superstition*⁵, as he calls it, had seized not cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country; that the Pagan temples were almost deserted, the sacred solemnities suspended, and scarce any purchasers to be found for the victims. About twenty years after this, Justin Martyr, a Christian writer, declares, that there was no nation of men, whether Greeks or Barbarians, not excepting even those savages that wandered in clans from one region to another, and had no fixed habitation, who had not learned to offer prayers and thanksgivings to the Father and Maker of all, in the name of Jesus who was crucified. And thus the Church of Christ went on increasing

¹ Acts i. 15.² Acts ii. 41.³ Acts ix. 4.⁴ Acts xxi. 20.⁵ The very name by which *modern* Pagans, as well as their predecessors, the ancient Heathens, describe the Christian Revelation.

more and more, till under Constantine the empire became Christian; at which time there is every reason to believe that the Christians were more numerous and more powerful than the Pagans.

In what manner, now, can we account for this wonderful and unexampled progress of the Christian Religion?

If this religion had set out with flattering the corrupt passions of mankind, and held up to them the prospect of power, wealth, rank, or pleasure, as the reward of their conversion; if it had soothed their vices, humoured their prejudices, and encouraged their ancient superstitions; if the persons who taught it had been men of brilliant talents, or commanding eloquence; if they had first proposed it in times of darkness and ignorance, and among savage and barbarous nations; if they had been seconded by all the influence and authority of the great potentates of the earth, or propagated their doctrines at the head of a victorious army, one might have seen some reason for their extraordinary success.

But it is well known that the very reverse of all this was the real truth of the case. It is well known, that the first preachers of the Gospel declared open war against all the follies, the vices, the interests, the inveterate prejudices, and favourite superstitions of the world; that they were (with few exceptions) men of no abilities, no learning, no artificial rhetoric or powers of persuasion; that their doctrines were promulgated in an enlightened age, and to the most polished nations, and had all the wit and learning, and eloquence and philosophy of the world to contend with; and that, instead of being aided by the authority and influence of the civil powers, they were opposed, and harassed, and persecuted by them even to death, with the most unrelenting cruelty: and all those who embraced their doctrines were exposed to the same hardships and sufferings.

Is it now credible, that, under these circumstances,

twelve poor illiterate fishermen of Galilee should be able, merely by their own natural powers, to spread their new religion in so short a space over so large a part of the then known world, without any assistance or co-operation from any quarter whatever? Did any thing of the kind ever happen in the world before or since? It is plainly unprecedented and impossible. As, therefore, all *human* means of success were against them, what else but *supernatural* means were left for them? It is clear almost to demonstration, that they must have been endowed with those miraculous powers, and favoured with that Divine assistance, to which they pretended, and which of course proved them to be the messengers of Heaven.



PROPOSITION VIII.

A Comparison between Christ and Mahomet, and their respective religions, leads us to conclude, that as the religion of the latter is confessedly the invention of man, that of the former is derived from God.

THERE is a religion in the world, called the Mahometan, which is professed in one part of Europe, and in most parts of Asia and Africa. The founder of this religion, Mahomet, pretended to be a prophet sent from God: but it is universally allowed by all, who are not Mahometans, and who have searched very carefully into the pretensions of this teacher, that he was an enthusiast and impostor, and that his religion was a contrivance of his own. Even those persons who reject Christianity do not think Mahometanism to be true; nor do we ever hear of a deist embracing it from conviction.

Here, then, we have two religions co-existing together in the world, and both pretending to be revelations from Heaven ! one of these we know to be a fraud, the other we affirm and believe to be true. If this be so, upon comparing them and their authors together, we may expect to find a most marked and essential difference between them, such a difference as may naturally be supposed to exist between an impostor and a divine teacher, between truth and falsehood. And this, I apprehend, will appear to be actually the case with respect to Christ and Mahomet, and their respective religions.

Mahomet was a man of considerable rank in his own country ; he was the grandson of a man of the most powerful and honourable family in Mecca, and, though not born to a great fortune, he soon acquired one by marriage. These circumstances would, of themselves, without any supernatural assistance, greatly contribute to the success of his religion. A person considerable by his wealth, of high descent, and nearly allied to the chiefs of his country, taking upon himself the character of a religious teacher, in an age of ignorance and barbarism, could not fail of attracting attention and followers.

Christ did not possess the advantages of rank and wealth, and powerful connections. He was born of parents in a very mean condition of life. His relations and friends were all in the same humble situation : he was bred up in poverty, and continued in it all his life, having frequently no place where he could lay his head. A man so circumstanced was not likely, by his own personal influence, to force a new religion, much less a false one, upon the world.

Mahomet indulged himself in the grossest pleasures. He perpetually transgressed even those licentious rules which he had prescribed to himself. He made use of the power he had acquired, to gratify his passions without control, and he laid claim to a

special permission from heaven to riot in the most unlimited sensuality.

Jesus, on the contrary, preserved throughout life the most unblemished purity and sanctity of manners. He did no sin, but was perfectly holy and undefiled. Not the least stain was ever thrown on his moral character by his bitterest enemies.

Mahomet was violent, impetuous, and sanguinary.

Christ was meek, gentle, benevolent, and merciful.

Mahomet pretended to have secret communications with God, and with the angel Gabriel, which no other person ever saw or heard.

Jesus was repeatedly declared to be the Son of God by voices from heaven, which were plainly and distinctly heard and recorded by others.

The appearance of Mahomet was not foretold by any ancient prophecies, nor was there at the time any expectation of such a person in that part of the world.

The appearance of Christ upon earth was clearly and repeatedly predicted by several ancient prophecies, which most evidently applied to him, and to no other ; and which were in the keeping of those who were professed enemies to him and his religion. And there was at the time of his birth a general expectation over all the East, that some great and extraordinary personage would then manifest himself to the world.

Mahomet never presumed to foretel any future events, for this plain reason, because he could not foresee them : and had he foretold any thing which did not come to pass, it must have entirely ruined his credit with his followers.

Christ foretold many things which did actually come to pass, particularly his own death and resurrection, and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Mahomet never pretended to work miracles ; on the contrary, he expressly disclaimed any such power, and makes several laboured and awkward apologies for not possessing it.

Jesus, we all know, worked a great number of the most astonishing miracles, in the open face of day, and in the sight of great multitudes of people. He made the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the lame to walk, the blind to see, and even the dead to rise from the grave.

Mahomet, during the first twelve years of his mission, made use only of argument and persuasion, and, in consequence of that, gained very few converts. In three years he made only fourteen proselytes, and in seven only eighty-three men and eighteen women.

In the same space of time, our Saviour and his Apostles converted thousands and tens of thousands, and spread the Christian Religion over a great part of Asia.

Mahomet told the Jews, the Christians, and the Arabs, that he taught no other religion than that which was originally taught to their forefathers, by Abraham, Ishmael, Moses, and Jesus. This would naturally prejudice them in favour of his religion.

Christ preached a religion which directly opposed the most favourite opinions and prejudices of the Jews, and subverted, from the very foundation, the whole system of Pagan superstition.

Mahomet paid court to the peculiar weaknesses and propensities of his disciples. In that warm climate, where all the passions are ardent and violent, he allowed them a liberal indulgence in sensual gratifications: no less than four wives to each of his followers, with the liberty of divorcing them thrice¹.

In the same climate, and among men of the same strong passions, Jesus most peremptorily restrained all his followers from adultery, fornication, and every kind of impurity. He confined them to one wife, and forbade divorce, except for adultery only. But

¹ Koran, c. 4. p. 42. Ib. c. 2. p. 41.

what was still more, he required them to govern their eyes and their thoughts, and to check the very first rising of any criminal desire in the soul. He told them, that whoever looked upon a woman to lust after her, had committed adultery with her already in his heart; and he assured them, that none but the pure in heart should see God. He declared open war,* in short, against all the criminal passions, and evil inclinations of mankind, and expressly required all his followers to renounce those favourite sins that did most easily beset them; nay, even to leave father, mother, brethren, sisters, houses, lands, and every thing that was most dear to them, and take up their cross and follow him.

With the same view above-mentioned, of bribing men to embrace his religion, Mahomet promised to reward his followers with the delights of a most voluptuous paradise, where the objects of their affection were to be almost innumerable, and all of them gifted with transcendant beauty and eternal youth¹.

Christ entirely precluded his disciples from all hopes of sensual indulgences hereafter, assuring them that in heaven they should neither marry nor be given in marriage, and promising them nothing but pure, celestial, spiritual joys, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived.

Besides the powerful attractions of sensual delights, Mahomet had another still more efficacious mode of producing conviction, and gaining proselytes: and that was force, violence, and arms. He propagated his religion by the sword: and, till he made use of that instrument of conversion, the number of his proselytes was a mere nothing. He was at once a prophet, a warrior, a general, and conqueror. It was at the head of his armies that he preached the Koran. His religion and his conquests went on together: and

¹ Koran, c. 56. p. 413.

the former never advanced one step without the latter. He commanded in person in eight general engagements, and undertook, by himself and his lieutenants, fifty military enterprises. Death or conversion was the only choice offered to idolaters, and tribute or conversion to Jews and Christians.

Jesus employed no other means of converting men to his religion, but persuasion, argument, exhortation, miracles, and prophecies. He made use of no other force but the force of ~~truth~~ truth; no other sword but the sword of the Spirit, that is, the word of God. He had no arms, no legions to fight his cause. He was the Prince of Peace, and preached peace to all the world. Without power, without support, without any followers but twelve poor humble men, without one circumstance of attraction, influence, or compulsion, he triumphed over the prejudices, the learning, the religion of his country; over the ancient rites, idolatry, and superstition, over the philosophy, wisdom, and authority of the whole Roman empire.

The great object of Mahomet was to make his followers soldiers, and to inspire them with a passion for violence, bloodshed, vengeance, and persecution. He was continually exhorting them to fight for the religion of God, and to encourage them to do so, he promised them the highest honours, and the richest rewards in paradise. "They who have suffered for my sake, and have been slain in battle, verily I will expiate their evil deeds from them, and I will surely bring them into a garden watered by rivers, a reward from God, and with God, a most excellent reward¹." This duty of warring against infidels is frequently inculcated in the Koran, and highly magnified by the Mahometan divines, who call the sword *the key of heaven and hell*, and persuade their people that the least drop of blood spilt in the way of God, as it

¹ Koran, ch. 3. p. 91. and ch. 9. p. 242.

is called, is most acceptable unto him; and that the defending the territories of the Moslems for one night, is of more avail than a fast of two months¹. It is easy to see to what a degree of fierceness this must raise all the furious vindictive passions of the soul, and what a horde of savages and barbarians it must let loose upon mankind.

The directions of Christ to his disciples were of a different temper. He positively forbade them the use of any violence whatever. The sword that was drawn by one of them in his defence he ordered to be sheathed; "Put up thy sword within the sheath; they that use the sword shall perish by the sword²." He would not consent to bring down fire from heaven on the Samaritans, who had refused to receive him; "The Son of man," he told them, "came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you. Do violence to no man; resist not evil. Be ye merciful, even as your Father in heaven is merciful. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy³."

The consequence was, that the first followers of Mahomet were men of cruelty and violence, living by rapine, murder, and plunder. The first followers of Jesus were men of meek, quiet, inoffensive, peaceable manners, and in their morals irreproachable and exemplary.

If now, after comparing together the authors of the two religions we have been considering, we take a short view of the sacred books of those religions, the Koran and the Gospel, we shall find a difference no less striking between them; no less strongly marking the truth of the one and the falsehood of the other.

The Koran is highly applauded, both by Mahomet himself, and his followers, for the exquisite beauty,

¹ Sale's Prem. Diss. s. 11. p. 189.

² Matt. xxvi. 52. John xviii. 11.

³ Luke ix. 56. John xiv. 27. Luke iii. 14. Matt. v. 39. Luke i. 36. Matt. v. 7.

purity, and elegance, of the language; which they represent as a standing miracle, greater than even that of raising the dead. But admitting its excellence (which yet has been questioned by several learned men), if beauty of style and composition is to be considered as a proof of divine inspiration, the writings of Plato and Xenophon, of Cicero and Cæsar, and a multitude of other inimitable writers, in various languages, will have as just a claim to a miraculous origin as the Koran. But in truth, these graces of diction, so far from being a circumstance favourable to the Koran, create a strong suspicion of its being a human fabrication, calculated to charm and captivate men by the arts of rhetoric, and the fascination of words, and thus draw off their attention, from the futility of its matter, and the weakness of its pretensions. These are the artifices of fraud and falsehood. The Gospel wants them not. It disdains the aid of human eloquence, and depends solely on the force of truth and the power of God for its success. "I came not (as St. Paul sublimely expresses himself) with excellency of speech, nor with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God ¹."

But, whatever may be the purity of the language, the matter and substance of the Koran cannot bear a moment's comparison with that of the Gospel. The narrative is dull, heavy, monotonous, uninteresting: loaded with endless repetitions, with senseless and preposterous fables, with trivial, disgusting, and even immoral precepts. Add to this, that it has very little novelty or originality to recommend it, the most material parts of it being borrowed from the Scriptures of the Old Testament or the New; and even these are so disguised and deformed, by passing through the hands of the impostor (who vitiates and debases every

¹ 1 Cor. ii. 1, 4, 5.

thing he touches) that you can hardly know them to be the same incidents or transactions that you read with so much delight in the Bible.

The Gospel, on the contrary, is every where concise, simple, original, animated, interesting, dignified; its precepts important, its morality perfect, its sentiments sublime, its views noble and comprehensive, its sanctions awful!

In the Koran, Mahomet is perpetually boasting of his own merits and achievements, and the supreme excellence of his book. In the Gospel no encomiums are bestowed by the Evangelists, either on themselves or their writings. Even the virtues of their divine Master are not distinctly specified, or brought forward into a conspicuous point of view. It is from his actions only, and his discourses, not from the observations of historians, that we can collect the various transcendent excellences of his character. Here we plainly see the sober modesty of truth, opposed to the ostentatious vanity of imposture.

In the description of future rewards and punishments, the Koran is minute, circumstantial, and extravagant, both in painting the horrors of the one, and the delights of the other. It describes things which cannot, and ought not, to be described, and enters into details too horrible or too licentious to be presented to the human mind.

In the Gospel the pains and the pleasures of a future life are represented concisely, in strong, but general and indefinite terms, sufficient to give them a powerful, but not an overwhelming influence over the mind.

There is still another and a very material mark of discrimination between the Koran and the Gospel. Mahomet shows throughout the utmost anxiety to guard against objections, to account for his working no miracles, and to defend his conduct, in several instances, against the charges which he suspects may be brought against him. This is always the case

with imposture. It is always suspicious, afraid of being detected, alive to every appearance of hostility, solicitous to anticipate, and eager to repel the accusations of enemies.

Truth has no occasion for such precautions, and therefore never uses them. We see nothing of this sort in the Gospel. The sacred historians show not the smallest solicitude, nor take the least pains to obviate cavils or remove difficulties. They relate plainly and simply what they know to be true. They entertain no doubt of it themselves, and seem to have no suspicion that any one else can doubt it; they therefore leave the facts to speak for themselves, and send them unprotected into the world, to make their way (as they have done) by their own native force and incontrovertible truth.

Such are the leading features of Mahomet and his religion on the one hand, and of Christ and his religion on the other: and never was there a stronger or more striking contrast seen than in this instance. They are, in short, in every essential article, the direct opposites of each other. And as it is on all hands acknowledged that Mahomet was an impostor, it is fair to conclude that Christ, who was the very reverse of Mahomet, was the very reverse of an impostor, that is, a real messenger from heaven. In Mahomet we see every distinctive mark of fraud: in Jesus not one of these is to be found; but, on the contrary, every possible indication and character of truth.

PROPOSITION IX.

The predictions delivered by the ancient prophets, and fulfilled in our Saviour, show that he was the Messiah expected by the Jews, and that he came into the world by divine appointment, to be the great Deliverer and Redeemer of mankind.

THE word MESSIAH signifies anointed; that is, a person appointed to some high station, dignity, or office; because originally among the eastern nations men so appointed (particularly kings, priests, and prophets) were anointed with oil. Hence the word Messiah means the person pre-ordained and appointed by God, to be the great deliverer of the Jewish nation, and the Redeemer of all mankind. The word CHRIST means the same thing.

Now it was foretold concerning the Messiah, that he should come before the sceptre departed from Judah, that is, before the Jewish government was destroyed¹; and accordingly Christ appeared a short time before the period when the Jewish government was totally overthrown by the Romans.

It was foretold that he should come before the destruction of the second temple. "The desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts, the glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former²." Accordingly, Christ appeared some time before the destruction of the city and the temple of Jerusalem by the Romans.

It was foretold by the prophet Daniel, that he should come at the end of 490 years after the rebuilding of Jerusalem, which had been laid waste during the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and that he should be

¹ Gen. xlix. 10.

² Haggai ii. 7. t.

cut off; and that afterwards the city and sanctuary of Jerusalem should be destroyed and made desolate¹. And accordingly, at what time soever the beginning of the 490 years can, according to any fair interpretation of the words, be fixed, the end of them will fall about the time of Christ's appearing: and it is well known how entirely the city and sanctuary were destroyed by the Romans some years after he was cut off and crucified.

It was foretold that he should perform many great and beneficial miracles; that the eyes of the blind should be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; that the lame man should leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing²; and this, we know, was literally fulfilled in the miracles of Christ; the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the deaf heard.

It was foretold that he should die a violent death; that he should be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; that the chastisement of our peace should be upon him; and that with his stripes we should be healed: that God would lay on him the iniquity of us all³. All which was exactly accomplished in the sufferings of Christ, "who died for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God"⁴.

It was foretold, that to him should the gathering of the people be; and that God would give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession⁵, which was punctually fulfilled by the wonderful success of the Gospel, and its universal propagation throughout the world.

Lastly, many minuter circumstances were told of the great Deliverer or Redeemer that was to come.

That he should be born of a virgin; that he should be of the tribe of Judah and the seed of David; that he should be born in the town of Bethlehem; that he should ride upon an ass in humble triumph into the

¹ Dan. ix. 26.
and Dan ix. 26.

² Isaiah xxxv. 5.
⁴ 1 Pet. iii. 18.

³ Isaiah liii. throughout,
⁵ Psalm. ii. 8.

city of Jerusalem; that he should be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; that he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver; that he should be scourged, buffeted, and spit upon; that he should be numbered with the transgressors (that is, should be crucified, as he was, between two thieves); that he should have gall and vinegar given him to drink; that they who saw him crucified should mock at him, and at his trusting to God to deliver him; that the soldiers should cast lots for his garments; that he should make his grave with the rich; and that he should rise again without seeing corruption¹. All these circumstances, it is well known, were foretold, and to the greatest possible exactness fulfilled in the person of Christ.

What now shall we say of these things? Here are upwards of twenty different particulars, many of them of a very extraordinary nature, which it was foretold, 700 years before our Saviour was born, would all meet in him, and which did all actually meet in his person. Is not this a most extraordinary consideration? There are but three possible suppositions that can be made concerning it: either that this was a mere fortuitous coincidence, arising entirely from chance and accident, or that these prophecies were written after the events had taken place; or, lastly, that they were real predictions, delivered many years before these events came to pass, and all fulfilled in Christ. That any one should by chance hit upon so many things which should all prove true, and prove true concerning one and the same person; though several of them were of such a nature as were unlikely to happen *singly*, and by far the greatest part of which had never before happened *singly to any person whatever*; this, I say, exceeds all bounds of credibility, and all power of conjecture or calculation.

¹ Isaiah vii. 14. Mich. v. Zech. ix. Isaiah liii. 3. Zech. xi. 12. Isaiah l. 6. Isaiah liii. 12. Psalm lxix. 22. Psalm xxiv. 7. 18. Isaiah liii. 9. Psalm xvi. 10.

That these prophecies were not written or delivered after the things predicted had happened, is most certain; because they are found in books which existed long before those events came to pass, that is, in the books of the Old Testament; and the Jews themselves, the mortal enemies of Christ and his religion, acknowledge that these prophecies were in those books, exactly as we now see them, many hundred years before Christ came into the world.

The books themselves were in their own keeping, in the keeping of our adversaries, who would undoubtedly take effectual care that nothing favourable to Christ should be fraudulently inserted into them. The Jews were our librarians. The prophecies were in their custody, and are read in all their copies of the Old Testament as well as in ours. They have made many attempts to *explain* them away, but none to question their authenticity.

It remains then that these are all real predictions, all centering in our Saviour, and in him only, and delivered many centuries before he was born. As no one but God has the foreknowledge of events, it is from him these prophecies must have proceeded; and they show, of course, that Christ was the person whom he had for a great length of time predetermined to send into the world to be the great Deliverer, Redeemer, and Saviour of mankind.

PROPOSITION X.

The prophecies delivered by our Saviour himself, prove that he was endued with the foreknowledge of future events; which belongs only to God, and to those inspired by Him.

HE did very particularly, and at several different times, foretel his own death, and the circumstances of it; that the chief priests and scribes should condemn him to

death, and deliver him to the Gentiles, that is, to Pilate and the Roman soldiers, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him; that he should be betrayed into their hands; that Judas Iscariot was the person who should betray him; that all his disciples would forsake him, and flee; and that Peter would particularly thrice deny him in one night. He foretold further, that he would rise again the third day; that, after his ascension, he would send down the Holy Ghost on his Apostles, which would enable them to work many miracles. He foretold, likewise, many particulars concerning the future success of the Gospel, and what should happen to several of his disciples: he foretold what opposition and persecution they should meet with in their preaching: he foretold what particular kind of death Peter should die, and intimated that St. John should live (as he did) till after the destruction of Jerusalem: he foretold that notwithstanding all opposition and persecution, the Gospel should yet have such success as to spread itself over the world; and lastly, he foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, with such very particular and minute circumstances, in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, the 13th of St. Mark, and the 21st of St. Luke, that no one who reads the description of that event, in the historians of those times, can have the smallest doubt of our Saviour's divine foreknowledge. We have a most authentic, exact, and circumstantial account of the siege and destruction of that city by the Romans, written by Josephus, a Jewish and contemporary historian; and the description he has given of this terrible calamity so perfectly corresponds with our Saviour's prophecy, that one would have thought, had we not known the contrary, that it had been written by a Christian on purpose to illustrate that prediction.

This power of foretelling future events is a plain proof that Christ came from God, and was endued with this power from above.

PROPOSITION XI.

The miracles performed by our Lord demonstrate him to have possessed Divine power.

ALTHOUGH the preceding Propositions contain very convincing proofs of the Divine mission of Christ, and the Divine authority of his Religion, yet undoubtedly, the strongest evidence of this arises from the wonderful and well-attested miracles which he wrought from the beginning to the end of his ministry. He cured the most inveterate diseases; he made the lame to walk; he opened the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf; he cast out devils; he walked upon the sea; he fed five thousand persons with a few small loaves and fishes, and even raised the dead to life again. These miracles were all wrought in open day, in the sight of multitudes of witnesses, who could not be imposed upon in things which they saw plainly with their own eyes, who had an opportunity of scrutinizing them as much as they pleased, and who did actually scrutinize them with a most critical exactness, as appears from the very remarkable instance of the blind man restored to sight by our Lord, in the ninth chapter of St. John, a transaction which I recommend very earnestly to the attention of my readers.

It is true that miracles being very unusual and extraordinary facts, they require very strong evidence to support them; much stronger, it must be owned, than common events that are recorded in history: and accordingly the miracles of Christ *have* this very strong and extraordinary evidence to support them; evidence such as is not to be equalled in any other instance, and such as is fully competent to prove the reality of the greatest miracle that ever was performed.

Besides a multitude of other persons who were eye-witnesses to these miracles, and who were actually convinced and converted by them, there were twelve persons, called Apostles; plain, honest, unprejudiced men; whom our Saviour chose to be his constant companions and friends, who were almost always about his person, accompanied him in his travels, heard all his discourses, saw all his miracles, and attended him through all the different scenes of his life, death, and resurrection, till the time of his ascension into Heaven. These persons were perfectly capable of judging whether the works which they saw Jesus perform were real miracles or not; they could tell whether a person whom they had known to be blind all his life was suddenly restored to sight by our Saviour's only speaking a word or touching his eyes: they could tell whether he *did* actually, in open daylight, walk upon the sea without sinking, and without any visible support; whether a person called Lazarus, whom they were well acquainted with, and whom they knew to have been four days dead and buried, was raised to life again merely by Christ saying, *Lazarus, arise!*

In these, and other facts of this sort, they could not possibly be deceived. Now these, and many other miracles, equally astonishing, they affirm that they themselves actually saw performed by our Saviour. In consequence of this, from being Jews, and of course strongly prejudiced against Christ and his outward appearance, which was the very reverse of every thing they expected in their Messiah, they became his disciples; and on account of their conversion, and more particularly on account of their asserting the truth of his miracles and his resurrection, they endured, for a long course of years, the severest labours, hardships, sufferings, and persecutions, that human nature could be exposed to, and at last submitted to the most cruel and excruciating death, all which they might easily have avoided, if

they would only have said that Christ was *not* the Son of God, that he never worked miracles, and never rose from the dead. Yet this they refused to say, and were content to die rather than say it¹.

Is not this giving the strongest proof of their sincerity, and of the reality of Christ's miracles, that human nature and human testimony are capable of giving? The concurrent and uncontradicted testimony of twelve such witnesses is, according to all the rules of evidence, sufficient to establish the truth of any one fact in the world, however extraordinary, however miraculous.

If there had been any powerful temptation thrown in the way of these men; if they had been bribed, like the followers of Mahomet, with sensual indulgences; or, like Judas Iscariot, with a sum of money, one should not have been much surprised at their persisting, for a time at least, in a premeditated falsehood. But when we know, that instead of any of these allurements being held out to them, their Master always foretold to them, and they themselves soon found by experience, that they could gain nothing, and must lose every thing in this world, by embracing Christianity; it is utterly impossible to account for their embracing it on any other ground than their conviction of its truth from the miracles which they saw. In fact, must they not have been absolutely mad to have incurred voluntarily so much misery, and such certain destruction, for affirming things to be true which they knew to be false; more especially as their own religion taught them, that they would be punished most severely in another world, as well as in this, for so wicked a fraud? Is it usual for men thus to sport with their own happiness, and their very lives, and to bring upon themselves, with their eyes open, such dreadful evils, without any reason in the world, and

¹ No man ever laid down his life for the honour of Jupiter, Neptune, or Apollo; but how many thousands have sealed their Christian testimony with their blood.—*Beattie*, v. ii.

without the least possible benefit, advantage, credit, or pleasure, resulting from it? Where have you ever heard of any instance of this sort? Would any twelve men you ever knew, especially men of credit and character, take it into their heads to assert that a certain person in the neighbourhood raised a dead man to life, when they knew that no such thing had ever happened; and that they would all, with one consent, suffer themselves to be put to death rather than confess that they had told a lie? Such a thing never happened since the world began. It is contrary to all *experience* and all credibility, and would be, in itself, a greater miracle than any of those that are recorded in the Gospel.

It is certain then (as certain as any thing can be that depends on human testimony) that real miracles were wrought by Christ; and as no miracles can be wrought but by the power of God, it is equally certain that Christ and his religion drew their origin from God¹.

PROPOSITION XII.

The Resurrection of our Lord from the dead is a fact fully proved by the clearest evidence, and is the seal and confirmation of his Divinity, and of the truth of his religion.

THE Resurrection of Christ being one of those miracles which are recorded in the Gospel, the truth of it is, in fact, already proved by what has been ad-

¹ On the clear and evident marks of discrimination between the real miracles of the Gospel, and the pretended miracles of Paganism and of Popery, see Bishop Douglas's *Criterion*, and Dr. Paley's most masterly observations in his *View of the Evidence of Christianity*, prop. i. ch. ii. §. 1. p. 320.

vanced respecting those miracles in the preceding article. But it is an event so singular in its nature, and so infinitely important in its consequences, that it well deserves to be made the subject of a distinct Proposition.

After our Saviour's crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea, we are told, laid the body in his new tomb, hewn out of a rock, and rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre. In order to secure themselves against any fraud, the Jews desired the Roman governor, Pilate, to grant them a band of soldiers to guard the sepulchre, lest, as they said, the disciples should come by night, and steal the corpse away. Pilate's answer was in these words: "Ye have a watch, go your way, make it as sure as you can: so they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch¹." The Evangelist then proceeds to relate the great event of the resurrection with that ingenuous and natural simplicity which characterizes the sacred historians, and which carries upon the face of it every mark of sincerity and truth.

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalen and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre. And behold there was a great earthquake; for the Angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel of the Lord answered, and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus that was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen from the dead; and behold he goeth before you into Galilee, there ye shall see him. Lo! I have told you. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold Jesus met them,

¹ Matt. xxvii. 65, 66.

saying, All hail ! and they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid ; go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me. Now when they were going, behold some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all that was done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, his disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept ; and if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught : and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews unto this day ¹."

Such is the relation of this wonderful fact given by St. Matthew, which comprehends not only his own account of it, but that also which was circulated in opposition to it by the chief priests and rulers of the Jews. Here, then, we have fairly before us the two different representations of this event by the friends and by the enemies of Christ ; of which the former asserts, that it was a real resurrection ; the other, that it was a fraud : and between these two we must form our opinions : for no third story has been set up, that we know of, by any one.

One thing is agreed on by both sides, viz. that the body was not to be found in the sepulchre. It was gone ; and the question is, by what means ? The soldiers gave out that the disciples "came by night while they slept, and stole it away." But it is not very easy to understand how the soldiers could depose to any thing that had passed while they were fast asleep ; they could not possibly tell in what manner the body was stolen away, or by whom. Nor, considering the extreme severity of the Roman military discipline, is it credible, that if they had

¹ Matt. xxviii. 1—16.

been asleep, they would have confessed; for it was certain death to a Roman soldier to be found sleeping upon guard. Nothing could have prevailed upon them to make such a declaration as that, but a previous promise of impunity, and reward from the Jewish rulers; a plain proof that they had been tampered with, and that it was a concerted story.

In the next place, supposing the story true, of what use could the dead body be to the disciples? It could not prove to them, or to others, that their Master was risen from the dead; on the contrary, it must have been a standing and visible proof of the contrary. It must convince them that he, instead of being the deliverer they expected, was an impostor, and they most cruelly deceived. And why they should choose to keep in their possession, and to have continually before their eyes a lifeless corpse, which completely blasted all their hopes, and continually reminded them of their bitter disappointment, is somewhat difficult to be imagined.

The tale, then, told by the soldiers, is, upon the very face of it, a gross and clumsy forgery. The consequence is, that the account given by St. Matthew is the true one. For if the body was actually gone (an acknowledged point on all sides), and if it was not, as we have proved, stolen away by the disciples, there are but two possible suppositions remaining; either that it was taken away by the Jews and Romans, or that it was raised to life again by the power of God. If the former had been the case, it could only have been for the purpose of confronting and convicting the disciples of falsehood and fraud by the production of the dead body. But the dead body was not produced. It was, therefore, as the Gospel affirms, raised from the grave, and restored to life. There is no other conceivable alternative left.

And that this actually was the case, is proved by our Lord's appearing, after his resurrection, not only

to the two women, who came first to the sepulchre; but to the two disciples going to Emmaus, and to the disciples assembled together at two different times, and to all the apostles, and to above 500 brethren at once. And he not only appeared to them silently, but he talked and ate with them; he showed them his hands and his feet; he made them handle him; he held several long conversations with them; and at last ascended up into heaven in their sight.

These were things of which the plainest and most ignorant men could judge. It was impossible for them to be deceived in an object with which they were well acquainted, and which presented itself to all their senses.

But there is another most decisive proof, arising from their own conduct, that they were perfectly convinced of the reality of our Lord's resurrection.

It appears that the apostles were far from being men of natural courage and firmness of mind. When our Lord was apprehended, all his disciples, we are told, forsook him, and fled. Peter followed him afar off, and went into a hall in the palace of the high priests, where the servants warmed themselves, and being there charged with being a disciple of Jesus, he peremptorily denied it three times with vehemence and with oaths. It does not appear that any of his disciples attended in the judgment-hall to assist or to support him; and, when he was crucified, the only persons that ventured to stand near his cross were his mother, and two or three other women, and St. John. They all, in short, appeared dismayed and terrified with the fate of their Master, afraid to acknowledge the slightest connection with him, and utterly unable to face the dangers that seemed to menace them. But immediately after the resurrection of their Lord, a most astonishing change took place in their conduct. From being the most timid of men, they suddenly became courageous, undaunted, and intrepid; they boldly preached that very Jesus who, but a

short time before, they had deserted in his greatest distress; and although his crucifixion was fresh before their eyes, and they had reason to expect the same or a similar fate, yet they persisted in avowing themselves his disciples, and told the Jews publicly, "that God had made that same Jesus whom they had crucified both Lord and Christ¹:" and when they were brought before the rulers and elders to be examined respecting the lame man whom they had cured at the gate of the temple, "Be it known unto you all (said they) and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, and whom God raised from the dead, even by him does this man stand before you all. This is the stone that was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head-stone of the corner; neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved²."

And when a second time they were brought before the council, and forbidden to teach in the name of Jesus, their answer was, "We ought to obey God rather than men." "And when they were again reprimanded, and threatened, and beaten, yet they ceased not in the temple, and in every house, to teach and to preach Jesus Christ; and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus³."

In what manner now shall we account for the sudden and most singular change in the disposition, and as it were, in the very constitution of the apostles? If Christ had not risen from the grave, and his dead body was in the possession of his disciples, was this calculated to inspire them with affection for their leader, and with courage to preach a doctrine which they knew to be false? Would it not, on the con-

¹ Acts ii. 36.

² Ibid. iv. 10, 11, 12.

³ Ibid. v. 20, 40; and iv. 37.

trary, have increased their *natural timidity*, depressed their spirits, extinguished all their zeal, and filled them with indignation and horror against a man who had so grossly deceived them, and robbed them, under false pretences, of every thing that was dear and valuable to them in the world? Most unquestionably it would. Nor is it possible to account, in any rational way, for the strange revolution which took place in their minds, so soon after their master's death, but by admitting that they were fully persuaded and satisfied that he rose alive from the grave.

It may be said, perhaps, that this persuasion was the effect, not of irresistible evidence, but of enthusiasm, which made them fancy that some visionary phantom, created solely by their own heated imagination, was the real body of their Lord, restored to life. But nothing could be more distant from enthusiasm than the character and conduct of these men, and the courage they manifested, which was perfectly calm, sober, collected, and cool. But what completely repels this suspicion is, that their bitterest adversaries never once accused them of enthusiasm, but charged them with a crime which was utterly inconsistent with it, fraud and theft; with stealing away the body from the grave. And if they did this, if that dead body was actually before their eyes, how was it possible for any degree of enthusiasm short of madness (which was never alleged against them) to mistake a dead body for a living man, whom they saw, and touched, and conversed with? No such instance of enthusiasm ever occurred in the world.

The resurrection of our Lord being thus established on the firmest grounds, it affords an unanswerable proof of the truth of our Saviour's pretensions, and consequently of the truth of his religion; for had he not been what he assumed to be, the Son of God, it is impossible that God should have raised him

from the dead, and thereby given his sanction to an imposture. But as he did actually restore him to life, he thereby set his seal to the divinity which he claimed, and acknowledged him, in the most public and authoritative manner, to be "his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased¹."

And the evidence of our Lord's divine mission is of the more importance, because our Saviour himself appealed to it as the grand proof of his being sent from heaven to instruct and to redeem mankind.—For when he cast the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and the Jews required of him a sign, that is, a miraculous proof, that he had the authority of God for doing those things, his answer was, "Destroy this temple (meaning his body) and in three days I will raise it up." When, therefore, he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the Scriptures, and the word which Jesus had said²; and they themselves constantly referred to the resurrection more than to any other evidence, as the great foundation on which their faith was built.

The reason for this, perhaps, was, that this great event contained in itself, at once, the evidence both of miracle and of prophecy. It was certainly one of the most stupendous manifestations of divine power that could be presented to the observation of mankind; and it was, at the same time, the completion of two most remarkable prophecies, that of our Saviour's above mentioned, and that well-known one of king David's, which St. Peter expressly applies to the resurrection of Christ, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption³."

¹ Matt. iii. 27.

² John ii. 19. 22.

³ Psalm xvi. 10. Acts ii. 27. On this subject of Christ's resurrection, I must again refer my young readers to Dr. Paley, vol. ii. c. ix. p. 209, and also to the conclusion of his work; the force of which, it seems to me, it is scarce possible for an unprejudiced reader to withstand.

CONCLUSION.

THESE are the principal proofs of the truth of the Christian Religion. Many others of a very satisfactory nature might be added; but the question may be safely rested on those that have here been stated.

And when we collect them altogether into one point of view; when we consider the deplorable ignorance and inconceivable depravity of the heathen world before the birth of Christ, which rendered a divine interposition essentially necessary, and therefore highly probable: the appearance of Christ upon earth, at the very time when his presence was most wanted, and when there was a general expectation throughout the East, that some great and extraordinary personage was soon to come into our world; the transcendent excellence of our Lord's character, so infinitely beyond that of every other moral teacher; the calmness, the composure, the dignity, the integrity, the spotless sanctity of his manners, so utterly inconsistent with every idea of enthusiasm or imposture; the sublimity and importance of his doctrines; the consummate wisdom and perfect purity of his moral precepts, far exceeding the natural powers of a man born in the humblest situation, and in a remote and obscure corner of the world, without learning, education, languages, or books: the rapid and astonishing propagation of his religion, in a very short space of time, through almost every region of the East, by the sole efforts of himself and a few illiterate fishermen, in direct opposition to all the power, the authority, the learning, the philosophy, the

reigning vices, prejudices, and superstitions of the world; the complete and marked opposition, in every essential point, between the character and religion of Christ, and the character and religion of Mahomet, exactly such as might be expected between truth and falsehood; the minute description of all the most material circumstances of his birth, life, sufferings, death, and resurrection, given by the ancient prophets, many hundred years before he was born, and exactly fulfilled in him, and him only; pointing him out as the Messiah of the Jews and the Redeemer of mankind: the various prophecies delivered by Christ himself, which were all punctually accomplished, more especially the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; the many astonishing miracles wrought by Jesus, in the open face of day, before thousands of spectators, the reality of which is proved by multitudes of the most unexceptionable witnesses, who sealed their testimony with their blood, and was even acknowledged by the earliest and most inveterate enemies of the Gospel: and lastly, that most astonishing and well-authenticated miracle of our Lord's resurrection, which was the seal and confirmation of his own Divine Origin, and that of his Religion; when all these various evidences are brought together and impartially weighed, it seems hardly within the power of a fair and ingenuous mind to resist the impression of their united force.* If such a combination of evidence as this is not sufficient to satisfy an honest inquirer into truth, it is utterly impossible that any event, which passed in former times, and which we did not see with our own eyes, can ever be proved to have happened, by any degree of testimony whatever. It may safely be affirmed, that no instance can be produced of any one fact or event, said to have taken place in past ages, and established by such evidence as that on which the Christian Revelation rests, that afterwards turned out to be false. We challenge

the enemies of our faith to bring forward, if they can, any such instance. If they cannot (and we know it to be impossible), we have a right to say, that a religion, supported by such an extraordinary accumulation of evidence, must be true; and that all men, who pretend to be guided by argument and by proof, are bound by the most sacred obligations, to receive the religion of Christ as a real revelation from God.

THE END.

THE CORRUPTIONS
OF THE
CHURCH OF ROME,
IN RELATION TO ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT,
THE RULE OF FAITH, AND FORM OF DIVINE WORSHIP:
IN ANSWER TO THE BISHOP OF MEAUX'S QUERIES.

BY THE
RIGHT REV. GEORGE BULL, D.D.
LATE LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S.

WITH A PREFACE AND NOTES,
BY THE REV. THOMAS P. PANTIN, M.A.
BISHOP OF WYLCOTE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.



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PREFACE.

THE tract, now reprinted for general distribution, is one of the several pieces or discourses which the author, Dr. Bull, compiled, on the Roman Catholic controversy¹. The occasion upon which it was written may in some measure be collected from the following letter of the Bishop of Meaux, the well known Bossuet; the writer of several works in defence of the doctrines of the Roman Church²; and also of

¹ The Corruptions of the Church of Rome, was first published in the year 1705 by Dr. Hickes; says the late lamented Dr. Burton, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, in the preface, p. xii. to the complete edition of Dr. Bull's works, printed at the Clarendon press, Oxford, in 1827. Other editions quickly followed that of 1705, in the years 1707 and 1708, during the life of Bishop Bull; among the later ones, two should be mentioned, in 1813 and 1827, by Dr. Burgess, the present learned Bishop of Salisbury. Burton's edition of Bull, *ibid.* p. v.

² As A Vindication of the Church of England from the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome; in answer to Mumford's Roman Catholic Scripturist; Burton's edition, vol. ii. p. 137. Also some of his sermons, particularly the fourth; in Burton's edition, vol. i. p. 83.

³ As his Exposition of the Doctrine of the (Roman) Catholic Church; passing over others, we may mention Dr. Wake in his Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, and its two Defences, in answer to Bossuet and his Vindicator. Dr. Wake's Treatises were separately published in his lifetime; they are collected and inserted in the third volume of Tracts against Popery, edited by Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London, at London, 1738, or shortly after. The Secret History of Bossuet's Exposition is also ably adverted to by the Rev. Joseph Mendham, in his Literary Policy of the Church of Rome, exhibited in her Indexes, both Prohibitory and En-purgatory, pp. 218—232, &c. London, 1830.

others¹, wherein he attacks the doctrines of the Reformed Churches.

Mr. Nelson, to whom Bossuet addressed this letter, tells us in his *Life of Bishop Bull*², that he had sent the doctor's work, "*The Judgment of the Catholic Church*," &c. to that bishop, as an acknowledgment of the favours he had received from him, when in France; and that when it was delivered to Bossuet, he, together with the other French bishops, had met at St. Germain's en Laye, upon matters relating to their church. The Bishop of Meaux and his brethren, having perused this work of Dr. Bull, desired, as the letter declares, not only his own thanks, but those also of the other bishops, in return for so acceptable a present, as "*The Judgment of the Catholic Church of the three first Centuries, concerning the Necessity of Believing that our Lord Jesus Christ is the true God.*"

From thence Bossuet takes occasion, as we shall see in his letter to Mr. Nelson, to inquire what Dr. Bull meant by the term, "*Catholic Church*;" and also to insinuate that the Church alone entitled to be so called, is that which maintains communion with the Bishop of Rome. This inquiry and insinuation, on the part of Bossuet, gave occasion to Bull's reply;

¹ The principal of these is Bossuet's *History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches*. In the foreign Reformed Churches, Jurien took part in the replies to this work, as Mr. Nelson observes in his *Life of Bishop Bull*, pp. 293, 294, (Burton's edition). The work, however, of James Basnage, at Rotterdam, in 1690, entitled, *The History of the Religion of the Reformed Churches, in answer to the Bishop of Meaux's Variations, together with what Bishop Burnet has written thereon*, should rather be mentioned.

² In Burton's edition, p. 237, &c. Robert Nelson, esq. the pupil, friend, and biographer of Bishop Bull (as himself relates, in his life, as before, p. 1), wrote not a few religious works; some of them on the Romish controversy. He is principally known, at this day, for his *Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England*; of which the thirty-second edition was published in 1815. He died in 1715, aged 59 years.

"The Corruption of the Church of Rome," &c. wherein he, at the commencement, refers to the very work so highly valued by the French clergy, in proof that he did not consider the Roman to be the Catholic Church; but, at the best, "a very unsound and corrupted member" thereof¹. Dr. Bull first states, what the Catholic Church is²; in the next place, that the ecclesiastical government, established in the primitive Church, had been broken down by the Roman Church and its bishop; and also that the rule of faith, as explained by the Councils of Nice and Constantinople, "had been changed, by adding new articles to it, as necessary to be believed in order to salvation, according to the confession of the Council of Trent." He then states what several of these new articles of faith, as either insisted upon, or imposed by the Roman Church, in her last General Council of Trent, are:—The sacrifice of the mass, as founded upon transubstantiation; communion in one kind; the doctrine of purgatory, and prayers for the dead, when dependent thereon. He afterwards proceeds to the invocation of saints; the worship of images; indulgences; the supremacy of the Roman Church, and therein of the rights and independence of the British Church; and thence to prayers in an unknown tongue; prayers to the saints, and especially the Virgin Mary; the elevation and adoration of the Host; not to notice other intervening particulars. Such is a rough outline of the principal matters, wherein Dr. Bull proves the corruptions of the Church of Rome, in reply to, and in confutation of the assertions, and insinuations of the Bishop of Meaux, to the contrary.

The notes added by me, to this edition, are intended, principally, for the English reader. The

¹ See p. 19 of this tract.

² See the table of contents, p. vii.

writers referred to, in Latin and French, will be found, generally, to have taken an extended view of their several subjects.

THO. P. PANTIN.

Westcote Rectory, Stow on the Wold
16th Feb. 1836.

A LETTER

From the Bishop of Meaux to ROBERT NELSON, Esq. upon his having read Dr. BULL's book, entitled, "The Judgment of the Catholic Church of the three first Centuries, concerning the necessity of believing that our Lord Jesus Christ is the true God¹;" presented to him by that worthy gentleman.

To Mr. Nelson at Blackheath.

St. Germaine en Laye, July 24, 1700.

I RECEIVED, Sir, about a fortnight ago, the honour of your letter, from Blackheath near London, dated the 18th of July of the last year, when at the same time you sent me Dr. Bull's book entitled, "The Judgment of the Catholic Church, &c." I must first, Sir, acquaint you, that the sight of your hand and name gave me a great deal of joy, and that I was extremely pleased with this testimony of your remembrance. As to Dr. Bull's performance, I was willing to read it all over, before I acknowledged the receipt of it, that I might be able to give you my sense of it. It is admirable, and the matter he treats could not be explained with greater learning and greater judgment. This is what I desire you would be pleased to acquaint him with, and at the same time with the unfeigned congratulations of all the clergy of France, assembled in this place, for the service he does the Catholic Church in so well defending her determination of the necessity of believing the Divinity of the Son of God. Give me leave to acquaint him, there is one thing I wonder at, which is, that so great a man, who speaks

¹Judicium Ecclesiæ Catholicæ Trium Primorum Seculorum de necessitate credendi, quod Dominus noster Jesus Christus sit verus Deus. Such is the title of Dr. Bull's Latin work, published in the year 1694, when Rector of Avening, in Gloucestershire. See his *Life*, p. 314.

so advantageously of the Church, of Salvation which is obtained only in unity with her, and of the infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost in the council of Nice; which infers the same assistance for all others assembled in the same Church, can continue a moment without acknowledging her. Or either, Sir, let him vouchsafe to tell me, who am a zealous defender of the doctrine he teaches, what it is he means by the term Catholic Church? Is it the Church of Rome, and those that adhere to her? Is it the Church of England? Is it a confused heap of societies separated the one from the other? And how can they be that kingdom of Christ not divided against itself, and which never shall perish? It would be a great satisfaction to me to receive some answer upon this subject, that might explain the opinion of so weighty and solid an author. I very much rejoice at the good news you send me of your lady's welfare, whom I heartily pray for, with you and your family. You have been rightly informed in the account you have received of the admirable qualifications of the Archbishop of Paris, now Cardinal de Noailles¹; the see of St. Denis has not for a long time been so worthily filled. If Mr. Collier², whom you mentioned, has written any thing in Latin concerning the modern mystical Divinity, you will oblige me in conveying it to me. But above all, remember, that I am with a great deal of sincerity,—Sir,

Your most humble, and most obedient Servant,

J. BENIGNE,

Bp. of Meaux.

¹ He was second son of the Duke de Noailles, peer of France, and after passing through the bishopricks of Cahors and Chalons on the Maine, was appointed Archbishop of Paris, in 1695. In the year 1700, he became a cardinal of the Roman Church; and died at Paris in 1729, aged almost 78 years.

² The Reverend Jeremy Collier, one of the nonjuring divines, or those who refused to take the oaths to King William and Queen Mary, after the abdication of James II. in 1688. He is still well known for his Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain, in 2 vol. folio, published in 1708. He died in 1726, aged 75.

DR. BULL'S ANSWER¹.

SECTION I.

THE approbation of my writings by so learned and illustrious a prelate as Monsieur de Meaux, especially when joined with the congratulations of the learned clergy of France in general, is so high an honour done me, that if I did not set a great value on it, I were altogether unworthy of it.

But as to the wonder of Monsieur de Meaux, I cannot but very much wonder at it, especially at the reasons on which it is grounded. He wonders how I that speak so advantageously of the Church, &c. can continue a moment without acknowledging her. Her! what her doth the bishop mean? *Doubtless the present Church of Rome, in the communion whereof he himself lives, and to which his design seems to be to invite me. But where do I speak so advantageously of the present Church of Rome? No where, I am sure. My thoughts concerning her, I have plainly (perhaps too plainly and bluntly in the opinion of Monsieur de Meaux) delivered in the book which he so commends, "The Judgment of the Catholic Church," chap. v. sect. 3. Where having

¹ "Just as Dr. Bull's Answer came to my hands I received the melancholy news of the Bishop of Meaux's death, which prevented the progress of that controversy." Nelson's Life of Bull, p. 332. Bossuet died April 12, 1704, aged 76 years; Bishop Bull died Feb. 1, 1710, aged also 76 years, after he had been Bishop of St. David's five years.

spoken of that singular purity of the faith, which was in the Church of Rome in the first ages, and taken notice of, and extolled by some of the primitive fathers, I thus conclude, "Oh that so great a happiness, such purity of faith had always continued in that Church! But alas! we may now cry out in the holy prophet's words, 'how is the faithful city become an harlot?' " Isaiah i. 21.

But Monsieur de Meaux seems to think the Roman and the Catholic Church to be convertible terms, which is strange in so learned a man, especially at this time of the day. Cannot the Catholic Church be mentioned, but presently the Roman Church must be understood? The book which the bishop refers to, bears this title, "The Judgment of the Catholic Church of the three first Centuries, &c." Of the Catholic Church of the three first centuries, I do indeed speak with great deference. To her judgment, (next to the Holy Scriptures,) I appeal against the oppugners of our Lord's Divinity at this day, whether Arians or Socinians. The Rule of Faith, the Symbols of Creeds, the profession whereof was in those ages the condition of communion with the Catholic Church, (mentioned by Irenæus¹, Tertullian², and

¹ Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons in Gaul, the disciple of Polycarp, wrote a considerable work against heresies, in part still extant. He suffered martyrdom, at an advanced age, about A. D. 202, or shortly after. Polycarp, his master, was the disciple of St. John, and by him ordained Bishop of Smyrna, in Asia; and afterwards suffered martyrdom A. D. 167, or some years earlier, at a very advanced age. He wrote an Epistle to the Philippians, which, together with an epistle concerning his martyrdom, by the Church of Smyrna, will be found in Dr. Wake's, Archbishop of Canterbury, translation of the Epistles of the Apostolic Fathers, p. 51, 138, &c. London, 1710. Cave's Chertophylax, London, 1685, p. 8 and 14.

² Tertullian is generally considered to have been a Presbyter of the Church of Carthage, in Africa, about the year 192; some time after which he fell into the errors of Montanus, a pretender to extraordinary inspiration. Beside the above, he wrote many works; the principal of which is his Apology in favour of the Christians; which may be found in English, translated by the Rev. William Reeves, together with other apologies of the Primitive Church, v. i. p. 143, &c. London, 1716.

others¹) I heartily and firmly believe. This primitive Catholic Church, as to her government and discipline², her doctrines of faith, and her worship of God, I think ought to be the standard, by which we are to judge of the orthodoxy and purity of all other succeeding Churches, according to that excellent rule of Tertullian in his works concerning *Præscription* against Hereticks, chap. xx. xxi. "Every descent must necessarily deduce itself from its first original. If these things are true, it is plain that every doctrine which these apostolical, these original and mother Churches held as analogous to the Rule of Faith, is

See also, *The Ecclesiastical History of the Second and Third Centuries*, illustrated from the Writings of Tertullian, by Dr. Kaye, the present learned Bishop of Lincoln, c. i. p. 8, 12, &c. 2d. edit. Cambridge, 1826. The original passage, as quoted by Dr. Bull, will be found in Dr. Burton's edition, vol. ii. p. 239, note.

¹ The English reader may find in Bingham's *Origines Ecclesiasticæ*, or *The Antiquities of the Christian Church*, book x. c. iii. sufficient information of the "original nature and names of the ancient Creeds of the Church;" in c. iv. of the same book, "a collection of several ancient forms of the Creed out of the primitive Records of the Church." Among others will be found those mentioned by Irenæus and Tertullian.

² See the 34th (35) of the Apostolic Canons, and the 8th Canon of the Council of Ephesus; translated into English, in Johnson's *Clergyman's Vade Mecum*, pp. 20, 136, 137. London, 1731. The original Greek (in Dr. Burton's edition, vol. ii. p. 231, 245,) and a Latin version, &c. will be found in *Beveregii Pandectæ Canonum*, &c. tom. i. p. 22, 104. Oxon. 1672; and in tom. ii. pp. 1—41, are Bishop Beveridge's Annotations upon the Apostolic Canons at large; that upon the 34th Canon, is contained in pp. 26, 27. His Annotations upon the Council of Ephesus are to be found, *ibid.* pp. 103—106; in which last he speaks of the 8th Canon. It was the bishop's opinion that the Apostolic Canons were formed not later than the end of the second, or the beginning of the third century after Christ, *ibid.* p. 4. n. x. The Council of Ephesus, referred to, is the third general council, held A.D. 431; and both these Canons direct the due subordination of the bishops of every province to him who is called (not only in the Council of Ephesus, but in the first General Council of Nice, A.D. 325) the metropolitan. See also that excellent work, *Cave's Dissertation concerning the Government of the ancient Church*, London, 1682, p. 59. In all things relating to the councils, and the writers of the Church, the translation of Du Pin's *Ecclesiastical History*, with the English editor's notes, will be found exceedingly useful.

to be owned as true, and as containing, without doubt, what the Churches received from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God ; but that all other doctrine is to be looked upon as false, and no ways favouring of those truths which have been delivered by the Churches, and the Apostles, and Christ, and God." And to the same purpose he discourseth, chap. xxxi.

According to this rule, the Church of England will be found the best and purest Church this day in the Christian World. Upon which account, I bless God that I was born, baptized and bred up in her communion ; wherein I firmly resolve by his grace to persist, as long as I live¹. How far the present Church of Rome hath departed from this primitive pattern, will appear hereafter.

Monsieur de Meaux adds as a further reason of his wonder, that I speak of salvation as only to be found in unity with her. Her ! Doth the bishop here again mean the present Church of Rome ? If he doth, I must plainly tell him, that I am so far from ever thinking, that salvation is only to be found in unity with her, that on the contrary I verily believe they are in great danger of their salvation, who live in her communion ; that is, who own her erroneous doctrines, and join in her corrupt worship, of which I shall give a large account before I have done. I do indeed, in the book which the bishop hath an eye unto, show that there was a canon or Rule of Faith received in the primitive Church², which whoever in any point thereof denied or opposed, was judged a heretic, and if he persisted in his heresy, cast out of the communion of the Catholic Church, and so out of the ordinary way of salvation. But what is this to the present Church of Rome and her communion ?

¹ *Usque ad extremum vitæ spiritum.* Dr. Burton, as above, p. 239.

² That the Creed was considered the Rule of Faith in the primitive and ancient Church, see also Bingham, *ibid.* book x. c. iii. § 2.

The bishop's last reason is, that I own the infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost in the Council of Nice, which infers the same assistance for all others assembled in the same church. To which I answer, I mention this, indeed, as the opinion of Socrates; but at the same time I give another account of the credit that is to be given to the determination of the Nicene Council in the article of our Saviour's divinity, in the Preface of my defence of the Nicene Faith¹, where my words are these: "But the same Socrates, chap. ix. of the same book, reproves Sabinus for not considering with himself, that they who came to this Council, how illiterate soever they were, yet being enlightened by God, and the grace of the Holy Ghost, could in no wise depart from the truth. For he seems to have thought the enlightening grace of the Holy Ghost always to accompany a general council of bishops, and to preserve them from error, especially in any of the necessary articles of faith; which supposition, if any one shall refuse to admit of, Socrates' argumentation may be thus directed and urged against him: The Nicene Fathers, let any imagine them as unskilful and illiterate as he will, yet in the main were doubtless pious men. But it is incredible that so many holy and approved men, assembled from all parts of the Christian world, (who, how defective soever in any other sort of knowledge, could by no means be ignorant of the first and fundamental doctrine of the Holy Trinity, a doctrine

¹ *Defensio Fidei Nicenæ; Proöm. § 3. Idem vero Socrates, &c.* See Burton's edit. vol. v. part i. p. 4. vol. ii. p. 241, note, for the original passages at length. Socrates here mentioned was an ecclesiastical historian of the ancient Church, and flourished about A.D. 440. His work was translated into English, and published, with those of Eusebius and Evagrius, in the year 1709, at London. The place of Socrates, here quoted, is contained in book i. chap. ix. p. 221, col. 2, of this translation. Sabinus, thus spoken of, was Bishop of Heraclea, in Thrace, about A.D. 425; he opposed the orthodox doctrine, maintained in the Council of Nice, which Council was convened A.D. 325, by Constantine, the first Christian emperor, a native of Britain. Cave's *Historia Literaria*, tom. i. p. 411, 183, 351, &c. Oxon. 1740.

wherein the very catechumens¹ were not uninstructed, or of what themselves had received from their predecessors concerning it,) should wickedly conspire amongst themselves to new model the faith received in the Church concerning this principal article of Christianity." And, indeed, all these things considered and laid together, it was morally impossible that the Nicene Fathers should have erred in the determination of the article before them. And that they did not actually err, I have sufficiently proved in the bishop's own judgment, in the following treatise.

But suppose I were fully of Socrates' opinion, concerning the infallible assistance of the Holy Ghost attending every truly general council in matters of faith, I should be never the nearer to the communion of the Church of Rome, as it is now subjected to the decrees of the Trent Council; for, as I afterwards add in the same preface*, section 8, "The assembly at Trent is to be called by any other name rather than that of a general council."

I proceed to the bishop's questions. He asks me what I mean by the Catholic Church? I answer, what I mean by the Catholic Church in the book which he all along refers to, I have already shown, and the very title of the book sufficiently declares. If he asks me what I mean by the Catholic Church, speaking of it as it now is, I answer by the Catholic Church I mean the church universal, being a collection of all the churches throughout the world who retain the faith ONCE² delivered to the saints (Jude 3); that is, who hold and profess in the substance of

¹ The Catechumens were those undergoing "instruction in the first principles of the Christian religion," previous to baptism. Bingham, as before, book x. c. i. § 1, &c.

² Dr. Burton's edition, vol. v. part i. p. 13, and vol. ii. p. 242, note for the original. Concerning the Council of Trent, see note 3, p. 25. n. 4. p. 64, &c. of this tract.

³ *Evangel.* Grotius, as others, observes on the place, that *once* is emphatically spoken, because that *nothing therein was to be changed*.

it, that faith and religion which was delivered by the apostles of Christ to the first original churches, according to Tertullian's rule before-mentioned; which faith and religion are contained in the Holy Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, and the main fundamentals of it comprised in the canon or Rule of Faith, universally received throughout the primitive churches, and the profession thereof acknowledged to be a sufficient badge¹ of a Catholic Christian. All the churches at this day which hold and profess this faith and religion, however distant in place, or distinguished by different rites and ceremonies, yea, or divided in some extra-fundamental points of doctrine, yet agreeing in the essentials of the Christian religion, make up together one Christian Catholic Church, under the Lord Christ, the supreme Head thereof. The Catholic Church, under this notion, is not a confused heap of societies separated one from another. But it seems no other union of the church will satisfy the bishop, but an union of all the churches of Christ throughout the world, under one visible head, having a jurisdiction over them all, and that head the Bishop of Rome for the time being. But such an union as this was never dreamt of amongst Christians for at least the first six hundred years, as shall be shown in its due place².

The Catholic Church, I believe, shall never totally fail, that is, Christianity shall never utterly perish from the face of the earth, but there shall be some to maintain and uphold it to the end of the world. Although some of the ancient doctors of the church have given us a very tragical description of the state of the universal Church of Christ, which shall be under the reign of the great Antichrist. But I know of no promise of indefectibility from the faith made

¹ See Bingham, as before, book x. c. iii. § 1, as to the Creed being called a badge, or tessera.

² See p. 23, 65, &c. of this tract.

to any particular church, no, not to the Church of Rome itself¹. And if we may judge by the Holy Scriptures, and by the doctrine and practice of the primitive Catholic Church, the present Church of Rome hath already lamentably failed, and fallen into many dangerous and gross errors, as will by and by appear. Now that Church which hath already so far failed, why may she not utterly fail? If she be found but in one error, the infallible direction of her judgment, upon which her indefectibility from the faith must depend, is gone and destroyed. I add, that divers eminent doctors², even of the Roman communion, have discovered, out of the Apocalypse, that Rome itself shall at length become the seat of Antichrist. If so, where will the Church of Rome then be?

But I wonder why Monsieur de Meaux should ask me, whether by the Catholic Church I mean the Church of Rome or the Church of England? He knows full well I mean neither the one nor the other; for to say either of the Church of Rome or of the Church of England, or of the Greek Church, or of any other particular Church, of what denomination soever, that it is the Catholic or universal Church, would be as absurd as to affirm that a part is the whole. And to be sure I never meant the Church of Rome to be the Catholic Church exclusively to all

¹ The words of the Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, xi. 20—22, apply in a remarkable manner to this point. “Be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed lest He also spare not thee*. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God. On them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: *otherwise thou also shalt be cut off*.”

² Ribera et Viega in Apoc. xvii. See Poli Synopsis Criticorum on Rev. xvii. 3, for Ribera and other Romish and Protestant Commentators. Francis Ribera's work on the Revelations was published in 1593, two years after his death; that of Blasius Viega in 1603, four years after his death. They were both Jesuits. See Alegambe Bibliotheca Scriptorum Societatis Jesu. Antwerp, 1643. Crowei Elenchus Scriptorum in Sacram Scripturam. Londini, 1672.

other churches. I am so far from any such meaning, that my constant judgment of the Church of Rome hath been, that if she may be allowed still to remain a part or member of the Catholic Church, which hath been questioned by some learned men, upon grounds and reasons not very easy to be answered, yet she is certainly a very unsound and corrupted one, and sadly degenerated from her primitive purity¹. This I must insist upon, and have obliged myself to prove; and I prove it thus:

¹ Whitaker, in his work, *De Ecclesia*, of the Church, quest. 6. Whether the Roman Church is a true, visible Church of Christ? c. iii. states the several arguments in disproof. These are, as regards the Bishop of Rome, 1st, That he does not, as the Apostle commands, 1 Tim. iii. 20, teach the Church; 2. That he calls himself universal bishop; 3. That in assuming to himself the title of head of the church he is truly antichrist, and the church dependent upon him antichristian. The arguments against the Church of Rome, at large, which Whitaker states, are founded upon the doctrines of justification, works, merit, assurance, the death and satisfaction of Christ, the rule of faith as contained in Scripture, the necessity of the Scriptures for the people, that God alone is the object of religious worship, and that matrimony is free equally to clergy as laity. With regard to the sacraments, the arguments against the Roman Church applies both to their use and number, and especially in the matter of transubstantiation, half-communion, the priest's receiving alone, the pretended sacrifice in the mass, and consequently the denial of the one sacrifice of Christ.—(Vide Whitakeri Opera, tom. 1. pp. 561-567. Geneva, 1610.)—On the other hand, Hooker, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book iii. § 1; Rainolds, in his *Sex Theses de Sacra Scriptura et Ecclesia*, thesis v.; Bishop Hall, in his *Old Religion*, c. i.; Bishop Stillingfleet, in his works, vol. iv. pp. 283-286, vol. v. part ii. pp. 15, 16; grant, with many more, that the Church of Rome is a true, though a corrupt and idolatrous church. Bishop Davenant, who cannot be accused of leaning towards the Roman Church, thus writes to Bishop Hall:—"To grant that the Roman was and is a true, visible, Christian church, though in doctrine a false, and in practice an idolatrous church, is a true assertion, and of greater use and necessity in our controversy with Papists about the perpetuity of the Christian Church than is understood by those who gainsay it."—See the Rev. Josiah Allport's *Translation of Davenant on the Colossians*, in the *Life of Davenant*, vol. i. p. 37. London, 1831.

SECTION II.

THE Church of Rome hath quite altered the primitive ecclesiastical government, changed the primitive canon or Rule of Faith, and miserably corrupted the primitive liturgy or form of divine worship.

1st, She hath quite altered the primitive ecclesiastical government, by erecting a monarch in the Church, and setting up her bishop, as the universal pastor and governor of the whole Catholic Church, and making all other bishops to be but his vicars and substitutes, as to their jurisdiction.

For that the Bishop of Rome had no such universal jurisdiction in the primitive times, is most evident from the sixth canon of the first Nicene Council, occasioned as it appears by the schism of Meletius, an ambitious bishop in Egypt, who took upon him to ordain bishops there, without the consent of the metropolitan Bishop of Alexandria¹. The words of the canon are these: "Let the ancient customs prevail that are in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, that the Bishop of Alexandria have the power over them all, for as much as the Bishop of Rome also hath the like custom². In like manner, in Antioch, and all other provinces, let the privilege be preserved to the Churches." From this canon it is plain, that the three metropolitan bishops, or primates, (they were not as

¹ See Stillingfleet's *Antiquities* of the British Churches, chap. iii. in his works, vol. iii. pp. 63, 64. * Cave, *ibid.* p. 60. Beveregii *Annot. ibid.* t. ii. p. 52.

² It is plain from this canon of the Council of Nice, and also from the 28th canon of the General Council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451, that the pre-eminence of the Bishop of Rome, depended not upon any divine appointment, as the Romanists pretend, but upon ecclesiastical custom, in conformity with the civil state. The 28th canon of Chalcedon ~~gives~~ ^{gives} equal privileges to the bishopric of Constantinople, with that of Rome, because that it was, as Rome had been, the residence of the Emperor. Beveregii, *ibid.* p. 124, &c.

yet, I think, called patriarchs¹) of Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch, had their distinct jurisdictions, each independent on the other; and that all other chief bishops or primates of provinces, had the same privileges which are here confirmed to them. It is true, this canon doth not particularly describe or determine what the bounds are of the Roman bishop's power, as neither doth it the limits of the Bishop of Antioch's jurisdiction, but only those of the Bishop of Alexandria's province. The reason hereof is manifest, the case of the Bishop of Alexandria only was at this time laid before the Synod, whose jurisdiction in Egypt had been lately invaded by the schismatical ordinations of Meletius, as I before observed. But that the Roman bishop's power, as well as that of the other metropolitans, had its bounds, is most manifest from the example that is drawn from thence, for the limits of other churches². For what an absurd

¹ As to "patriarchs, Dr. Cave, *ibid.* pp. 154, 155, observes, "The first time that I remember to have met with a patriarch, strictly so called, is in the Letters of Theodosius and his Empress Placidia, about calling the third general council holden at Ephesus, A. D. 431, above a century after the Council of Nice."

² What the limits of the Roman bishop's jurisdiction were at the time of the Council of Nice, Ruffinus, who lived shortly after, a learned presbyter of the Church of Aquileia, in Italy, will inform us, in his paraphrase (*Ecclesiastical History*, b. i. c. vi.) upon the 6th canon of the Council of Nice: "According to ancient custom, as he (the Bishop of Alexandria) had in Egypt, so the Bishop of Rome had the care and charge of the suburbicary churches." Cave, *ibid.* p. 121. Beveregii *Annot. ibid.* p. 51. What, however, these suburbicarian churches were, and how far they extended, has been disputed. Dr. Cave, *ibid.* p. 106—136, has, with his accustomed clearness, stated his opinion, that the suburbicarian churches "lay within one hundred miles round Rome; the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome being of equal circumference with that of the Roman Provost," *ibid.* pp. 117, 118. With him agree Stillingfleet, for the most part, *ibid.* vol. iii. p. 71, 72; Beveridge, *ibid.* p. 57, &c. Some other writers of the Reformed Churches, and the more moderate among the Romanists, suppose the suburbicarian churches to have extended not only to a considerable portion of the main land of Italy, but also to several of the larger islands; and thus comprise the following provinces within their estimate, 1. Campania; 2. Tuscia and Umbria; 3. Picenum Suburbicarium; 4. Sicilia; 5. Apuleia and Calabria;

thing is it, that the Church of Rome should be made the pattern for assigning the limits to other metropolitan churches, if that church also had not her known limits at the same time when this canon was made! Intolerable is the exposition which Bellarmine¹ and other Romanists give of these words of the canon: for as much as the Bishop of Rome also hath the like custom, *i. e.* (they say,) ² "It was the custom of the Bishop of Rome to permit, or leave to the Bishop of Alexandria the regimen of Egypt, Lybia and Pentapolis³." Certainly, this canon⁴ immediately implies a like custom in the Church of Alexandria, and in the Church of Rome; and the sense of the canon is most evident, that the Bishop of Alexandria should, according to the ancient custom of the church, (not by the permission of the Roman bishop,) enjoy the full power in his province, as by

6. Brutii and Lucania; 7. Samnium; 8. Sardinia; 9. Corsica; 10. Valeria. The remaining seven provinces of Italy were wholly independent of the metropolitan Bishop of Rome, being governed by their own metropolitan Bishop of Milan; these were, 1. Venice with Istria; 2. Æmilia; 3. Liguria; 4. Flaminia with Picenum Annonarium; 5. The Cottian Alps; 6. Rhœtia prima; 7. Rhœtia secunda. See Bingham, *ibid.* b. ix. c. i. § 9, &c. Crakanthorpii *Defensio Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*, chap. xxii. pp. 145, 146. London, 1625. Du Pin de *Antiqua Ecclesiæ Disciplina*, diss. i. § 14. p. 92.

¹ See note in p. 43 of this tract concerning him.

² In addition to the authorities just quoted in the above note, we may mention, to omit others, those of Cardinal de Cusa and Ellis du Pin, Dr. of the Sorbonne, both eminently learned members of the Roman Church. The cardinal, in his work, *De Catholica Concordantia*, l. ii. c. xii. thus comments on the 6th canon of the Council of Nice. "As the Bishop of Rome has authority over all his own bishops, so the Bishop of Alexandria has, according to custom, throughout Egypt." Du Pin, *ibid.* p. 86, observes on this canon, "The comparison made between the Bishop of Alexandria and Rome is—as the former is the head of the diocese of Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, so the latter is of the suburbicarian provinces." These may suffice, in answer to the place just quoted by Bishop Bull, from Bellarmine, which will be found in his controversies, *De Pontifice Romano*, l. ii. c. xiii. *Quarta igitur et.* And compare also Stillingfleet, *ibid.* vol. iv. p. 379, &c. with De Marca, *De Concordia Sacerdotii et Imperii*, l. i. c. iii. n. 12, &c.

³ The words referred to: *οὗτος οὐνὸς ἑστίν*, closely translated, are, "this is a like custom." Dr. Burton gives some portion of this canon in Greek, v. ii. p. 246, note.

the like ancient custom the Bishop of Rome had the jurisdiction of his. But they that would see this canon fully explained and cleared from all the trifling cavils and exceptions of the Romanists, may consult the large and copious annotations of the learned Dr. Beveridge,¹ Bishop of St. Asaph, upon it, where they will receive ample satisfaction².

Thus was the government of the Catholic Church in the primitive times distributed among the several chief bishops or primates of the provinces, neither of them being accountable to the other, but all of them to an oecumenical council, which was then held to be the only supreme visible judge of controversies arising in the church, and to have the power of finally deciding them. Hence the case of the Bishop of Alexandria before mentioned, was not brought before the Bishop of Rome, or any other metropolitan, but referred to the fathers of the Nicene Council to be finally determined by them.

The universal pastorship or government of the Catholic Church, was neither claimed by any bishop till towards the end of the sixth century, and then it was thought to be challenged by John Patriarch of Constantinople, assuming to himself the title of oecumenical or universal bishop; whom Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, vehemently opposed, pronouncing him the forerunner of Antichrist, who durst usurp so arrogant a title. And it is worthy observing how passionately the same Gregory expresseth his detestation of the pride and arrogance of the

¹ Those persons who would understand not only the subject matter in particular, of this 6th canon of the council of Nice, but also what the government of the ancient Church was, should study Bishop Beveridge thereon, as already referred to. Beveridge was one of the most learned men of his age, and a diligent preacher. He became Bishop of St. Asaph in 1704, and died in 1706, aged 70 years. His works, with life, and a critical examination of his writings by the Rev. Thos. Hartwell Horne, were published in 1824.

² Beveregii, *ibid.* pp. 49—60, where, among other particulars, he shows, that metropolitans were the highest degree of bishops at that time; and also Cave, *ibid.*

Patriarch of Constantinople, in his letter to Mauritius the emperor¹: "I am forced to cry out, O the times! O the manners! All things in the parts of Europe are delivered up to the power of barbarous people. Cities are destroyed, castles demolished, provinces depopulated, &c. and yet the bishops, who ought to have lain prostrate on the ground covered with ashes and weeping, even they covet to themselves names of vanity, and glory in new and profane titles." And yet this name of vanity, this new and profane title of universal bishop, was afterwards accepted by Boniface III. Bishop of Rome², when it was offered him by the bloody miscreant Phocas, the emperor³; and the same title has been owned by the succeeding bishops of the Roman Church, and that as due to them by divine right. Indeed, it may be questioned whether John of Constantinople, by assuming the title of oecumenial bishop, meant that he had an universal jurisdiction over all other bishops and churches⁴: but this is certain, that Gregory opposed the title under this notion; this appearing abundantly from his epistle to John the Patriarch⁵; and it is as certain that under the same notion the Bishops of Rome afterwards assumed that title, and do claim it to this day. Nay, the universal pastorship and jurisdiction of the Roman bishop over all bishops and churches, is now no longer a mere court opinion,

¹ Greg. lib. iv. epist. 32. lib. v. epist. 20. The original passage of Gregory is in Burton's edition, vol. ii. p. 248, note.

his

tom. i. p. 544, and his Dissertation on the Government of the Ancient Church, p. 310, &c. John Bishop of Constantinople, surnamed the Faster, attained to that see, A. D. 589, and died about 596. Cave's *Historia Literaria*, *ibid.* p. 541.

² Phocas had previously murdered the emperor Mauritius and his family. Cave, *ibid.* p. 323, &c. As to Boniface accepting the above title, see Cave, *ibid.* p. 326, &c.

⁴ Cave speaks to the same purpose, *ibid.* p. 299, &c.

⁵ *Ibid.* iv. epist. 38. lib. v. epist. 18. See Burton, as before, p. 248.

maintained only by the pope's parasites and flatterers, but is become a part of the faith of the Church of Rome; it being¹ one of the articles of the Trent creed, to which all ecclesiastics are sworn themselves, and which by the same oath they are obliged to teach the laity under their care and charge, as hereafter will appear. So that now there is no room for that distinction, wherewith some have soothed and pleased themselves, between the Church and Court of Rome²; for the court is entered into the Church of Rome, or rather the court and Church of Rome are all one.

SECTION III.

2. THE Church of Rome hath changed the primitive canon, or Rule of Faith³, by adding new articles to it, as necessary to be believed in order to salvation: look to the Confession of Faith, according to the Council of Trent. It begins indeed, with the primitive Rule of Faith as is explained by the Council of Nice and Constantinople⁴; and happy had it been for the Church of Christ if it had ended there. But there are added afterwards a many new articles, and with reference to them, as well as to the articles of the old creed; it concludes thus: "This true Catholic faith, without which none can be saved, which I

¹ See Appendix to this tract, p. 94. Article 11.

² See Dr. Lloyd's (Bishop of Worcester) *Difference between the Church and Court of Rome considered.* London, 1674.

³ See p. 14 of this tract, and note there, &c.

⁴ The last Council of the Roman Church, which the members of that Church speak of as general, that of Trent, in 1545, decreed that the Constantinopolitan Creed (called in the Communion Service of the Church of England, the Nicene Creed, Bingham, *ibid.* b. x. c. iv. § 16.) was "the firm and only foundation of the faith, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail," Matthew xvi. 18; which is in direct contradiction to the Trent Creed, more especially its conclusion set down by Bishop Bull in this place. See also Appendix to this tract, pp. 93—95.

now willingly profess and unfeignedly hold ; the same I promise, vow, and swear, by the help of God, most constantly to keep and confess, entire and inviolate, even to my last breath ; and to endeavour moreover, to the utmost of my power, that it may be kept, taught, and professed by all my subjects, or by those that are any way under my care. So help me God, and these his holy Gospels¹."

Now if you examine those articles that follow after the Constantinopolitan Creed, you will find they are not merely explicatory of any article or articles of the old canon of faith (such as that of the Greek word², of which the meaning is *of the same substance*, in the Nicene Confession, which was virtually contained in the ancient canon, and by good consequence deducible from it, and was apparently also the sense of the Catholic Church before the Nicene Council), but they are plain additions to the Rule of Faith. Now if these articles were true, yet they ought not presently to be made a part of our creed ; for every truth is not fundamental, nor every error damnable. We deny not but that general or provincial councils may make constitutions concerning extra-fundamental verities, and oblige all such as are under their jurisdiction to receive them, at least passively, so as not openly and contumaciously to oppose them. But to make any of these a part of the creed, and to oblige all Christians under pain of damnation³ to receive and believe them, this is really to add to the creed, and to change the ancient canon or rule of faith. But, alas ! these superadded articles of the Trent Creed, are so far from being certain truths, that they are most of them manifest untruths, yea, gross and dangerous errors. To make this appear, I shall not

¹ See the original in Burton's edition, vol. ii, p. 249, note.

² *ὁμοούσιος*.

³ The Roman Church, in this confession of faith, or bull of Pius IV. after having enumerated its several articles, near the end, insists (see p. 95, in the Appendix to this tract), "This is the true Catholic faith, without which no man can be saved."

refuse the pains of examining some of the chief of them.

The first article I shall take notice of is this: "I profess, that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there is truly, and really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is wrought a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation¹." Where this proposition, That in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead,—having that other of the substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist immediately annexed to it, the meaning of it must necessarily be this, that in the eucharist the very body and blood of Christ are again offered up to God as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of men. Which is an impious proposition, derogatory to the one full satisfaction of Christ made by his death on the cross, and contrary to express Scripture;—"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once, when He offered up himself." Hebrews vii. 27. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.—And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the First Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.—For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the

¹ See Burton, as before, p. 251. Appendix to this tract, p. 94. Article 5.

end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.—So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Hebrews ix. 12, 15, 26, 28. “But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.—For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” Hebrews x. 12, 14. It is true, the Eucharist is frequently called by the ancient fathers an oblation, a sacrifice¹. But it is to be remembered, that they say also it is a reasonable sacrifice, a sacrifice without blood². Which, how can it be said to be, if therein the very blood of Christ were offered up to God.

They held the eucharist to be a commemorative sacrifice, and so do we. This is the constant language of the ancient liturgies, We offer by way of commemoration³; according to our Saviour’s words, when He ordained this holy rite, Do this in commemoration of me⁴. In the eucharist then, Christ is offered not hypostatically as the Trent fathers have determined (for so he was but once offered), but commemoratively only: and this commemoration is made to God the Father, and is not a bare remembering, or putting ourselves in mind of Him. For

¹ ἱεροφασγὰν, θυσίαν.

² Θυσία λογική καὶ ἀναιμακτος. Burton, as before, p. 251, note, adds (V. Constit. Apost. vi. 23.) The places of the ancient fathers, are collected by Mede in his Christian Sacrifice, c. iv. (Works, p. 360, &c. London, 1677).

³ Burton, as before, for the original, p. 252, note (α).

⁴ Burton, as before, note (ο), Luke xxii. 19. Justin Martyr Dial. cum Tryph. p. 296, 297 (c. lxx. p. 168, 9). Justin the Martyr suffered early for the faith of Christ, about the year 164. He was by birth a Samaritan, and had been a follower of the Platonic school; from which he was converted to Christianity, about A.D. 133. Beside the work here referred to, his Disputation with the Jew Tryphon, he wrote others, particularly his Apology for the Christians. The latter, Reeves, as before mentioned, translated, and it will be found in his vol. i. p. 13; the former, the dialogue with Tryphon, was translated into English, in the year 1755.

every sacrifice is directed to God, and the oblation therein made, whatsoever it be, hath Him for its object, and not man. In the holy eucharist, therefore, we set before God the bread and wine, as figures, or images of the precious blood of Christ shed for us, and of His precious body (they are the very words of the Clementine¹ Liturgy²), and plead to God the merit of His Son's sacrifice once offered on the cross for us sinners, and in this sacrament represented; beseeching Him for the sake thereof, to bestow His heavenly blessings on us.

To conclude this matter: the ancients held the oblation of the eucharist to be answerable in some respects to the legal sacrifices; that is, they believed that our blessed Saviour ordained the sacrament of the eucharist as a rite of prayer and praise to God, instead of the manifold and bloody sacrifices of the law. That the legal sacrifices were rites to invoke God by, is evident from many texts of Scripture, see especially, 1 Sam. vii. 9. "And Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it for a burnt-offering wholly unto the Lord: and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel; and the Lord heard him."—"And Saul said: I have not made supplication unto the Lord: I forced myself therefore and offered a burnt-offering." 1 Sam. xiii. 12; Ezra vi. 10; Prov. xv. 8. And that they were also rites for praising and blessing God for His mercies, appears from 2 Chron. xxix. 27. "And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar. And when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets," &c.—Instead therefore of slaying of beasts, and burning of incense, whereby they praised God, and called upon His name under the Old Testament; the fathers, I say, believed our Saviour appointed this sacrament of bread and wine, as a rite whereby to give thanks and make supplication to

¹ Burton, as before, note (p) page 252.

² See Mede, as before, c. viii. and ix.

His Father in His name. This you may see fully cleared and proved by the learned Mr. Mede¹, in his treatise, intituled, "The Christian Sacrifice." The eucharistical sacrifice thus explained, is indeed a reasonable sacrifice², widely different from that monstrous sacrifice of the mass, taught in the Church of Rome.

The other branch of the article is concerning Transubstantiation, wherein the ecclesiastic professeth upon his solemn oath his belief, that in the eucharist there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood of Christ³—a proposition that bids defiance to all the reason and sense of mankind; nor, God be praised, hath it any ground or foundation in divine revelation. Nay, the text of Scripture on which the Church of Rome builds this article, duly considered, utterly subverts and overthrows it. She grounds it upon the words of the institution of the holy sacrament by our Saviour the same night wherein he was betrayed, when he took bread and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given," saith St. Luke (c. xxii. v. 19); "which is broken for you," saith St. Paul⁴ (1 Cor. c. xi. v. 24). After the same manner he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed⁵ for many for the remission of sins." Now whatsoever our Saviour said was undoubtedly true, but these words could not be true in a proper sense, for

¹ The Reverend Joseph Mede, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, died A.D. 1638, aged 52. He wrote many dissertations on various subjects. His work on the Revelation of St. John, written in Latin, has rendered his name famous, and has been translated into English more than once.

² *λογικὴ θυσία*.

³ See Appendix to this tract, p. 94, Article 5.

⁴ The original words employed by St. Luke and St. Paul, as referred to by Dr. Bull, are *τὸ δίδωμεν*; *τὸ κλάμεν*.

⁵ *Τὸ ἰχθύμεν*.

our Saviour's body was not then given, or broken, but whole and inviolate, nor was there one drop of his blood yet shed. The words therefore must necessarily be understood in a figurative sense, and then what becomes of the doctrine of Transubstantiation? The meaning of our Saviour is plainly this: What I now do is a representation of my death and passion near approaching; and what I now do, do ye hereafter, do this in remembrance of me; let this be a standing, perpetual ordinance in my church to the end of the world; let my death be thus annunciated and shown forth till I come to judgment. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."—See 1 Cor. xi. 26.

As little foundation hath this doctrine of Transubstantiation in the ancient Church, as appears sufficiently from what hath been already said concerning the notion then universally received of the eucharistical sacrifice. It was then believed to be a commemoration², by the symbols of bread and wine, of the body and blood of Christ, once offered up to God on the cross for our redemption; it could not therefore be then thought an offering up again to God of the very body and blood of Christ, substantially

¹ We have not a few learned Roman Catholics admitting that transubstantiation cannot be proved out of the Holy Scriptures. See Albertini de Eucharistia, lib. i. cap. xvi.; Cosin Historia Papalis Transubstantionis, c. iii. n. 3. Of these I will mention two only: Fisher, the Cardinal, and Bishop of Rochester (lib. contra Lutherum de Capt. Babylon, c. i.) acknowledges "That there is no word to be found in Scripture by which it can be proved that a change of substance is made in the mass." Cardinal Cajetan also confesses (in Thomam. part. iii. 9, 75, art. i.) "there is not anything in the Gospel which obliges us to understand these words properly, 'This is my body;' nay, rather, that Presence in the sacrament, which the Roman Church maintains, cannot be proved from these words of Christ, unless the declaration of the Roman Church should also be adduced."

² The original word in Greek is *ἀνάμνησις*. See, in addition to Mede, Payne's Discourse on the Sacrifice of the Mass, in Bishop Gibson's Preservation against Popery, vol. ii. title 6, pp. 70-71, for various passages in the Fathers.

present under the appearance of bread and wine; for these two notions are inconsistent, and cannot stand together. The ancient doctors, yea, and liturgies of the church, affirm the eucharist to be a sacrifice without blood¹, which it cannot be said to be if the very blood of Christ were therein present and offered up to God. In the Clementine Liturgy², the bread and wine in the eucharist are said to be antitypes, correspondent types, figures, and images³ of the precious body and blood of Christ; and divers others of the fathers⁴ speak in the same plain language.

We are not ignorant that the ancient fathers generally teach, that the bread and wine in the eucharist, by or upon the consecration of them, do become and are made the body and blood of Christ; but we know also, that though they do not all explain themselves in the same way, yet they do all declare their sense to be very dissonant from the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Some of the most ancient doctors of the church, as Justin Martyr⁵ and Irenæus, seem to have

¹ *Incruentum sacrificium*. See Payne, *ibid.* p. 74; Mede, *ibid.* p. 366, &c.

² Cardinal Bona (*Rerum Liturgiarum*, lib. i. cap. viii. n. 4) asserts that the Liturgy ascribed to Clement, the companion of St. Paul (*Philippians* iv. 3,) was a production of the second or not later than the third century. See also Hospiniani *Historiæ Sacramentariæ*, lib. i. p. 92, &c. in vol. ii. of his collected works.—See Bingham, as before, book xiii. c. v. § 3.

³ See also Forbesii *Instruct. Historiæ Theologicæ* lib. xi. c. ix. n. 12, &c.

⁴ Vide Gregory Nazianzen, *Apol. Orat. i. tom. i.*; Cyril Hierosol. v.: *Cat. Myst. Ambros. de Sacrament. lib. iv. cap. iv.* Gregory, called Nazianzen because of his birth near the city of Nazianzum, in Cappadocia, in Asia. He was bishop of Constantinople, but abdicated, and died A.D. 389, aged 65, leaving a great character behind him, which his works testify. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, after being driven from his bishopric, and his conduct and opinions variously represented, died at Jerusalem in peace, A. D. 399. Ambrose, the celebrated Bishop of Milan, in Italy, author of many works, died A.D. 397, aged 64. The work on the sacraments, here quoted as his, is considered, upon good grounds, to have been written at a much later period. As to these Fathers of the Church, see Cave's *Historia Literaria*, tom. i. under their several names.

⁵ Burton refers in his notes, p. 255, to the Apology of Justin Martyr, i. 66, p. 83, to the work of Irenæus, book iv. 18, p. 251.

had this notion, that by or upon the sacerdotal benediction, the Spirit of Christ, or a divine virtue from Christ, descends upon the elements, and accompanies them to all worthy communicants, and that therefore they are said to be and are the body and blood of Christ, the same Divinity which is hypostatically united to the body of Christ in Heaven, being virtually united to the elements of bread and wine on earth; which also seems to be the meaning of all the ancient liturgies, in which it is prayed that God would send down His Spirit upon the bread and wine in the eucharist. And this, doubtless, is the meaning of Origen¹, where, speaking of the holy eucharist, he says, that therein "we eat bread, by prayer (*i. e.* by the prayer of consecration for the descent of the Divine Spirit upon it) made a certain holy body, which also sanctifies those who with a sound or sincere purpose of heart use it." But that neither Justin Martyr, nor Irenæus, nor Origen, ever dreamt of the Transubstantiation of the elements is most evident; for Justin Martyr and Irenæus do both of them plainly affirm, that by eating or drinking the bread and wine in the eucharist, our bodies are nourished, and that the bread and wine are digested and turned into the substance of our bodies², which to affirm of the glorified body of Christ, were impious and blasphemous, and to affirm the same of the mere accidents of the bread and wine would be very absurd

¹ In his Eighth Book against Celsus, page 399, in Greek and Latin, at Cambridge, 1677. Burton gives the original Greek, p. 256, note. Origen was one of the most learned men, and unwearied writers of the primitive church. He was born at Alexandria in Egypt, and died at Tyre, A.D. 254, aged 69. He has been blamed, and indeed condemned, for some of his opinions. The work here quoted, against Celsus, must always support the celebrity he has acquired; of which we have an edition in Greek and Latin, at Cambridge, in 1677, by the Rev. William Spencer, with notes by him and others. An abridgment of its contents was published in English, some time in the eighteenth century, by James Bellamy.

² See Cosin, *ibid.* c. v. n. 7 (of which work there is an English translation, in 1676) with the observations thereon.

and ridiculous. And Origen expressly saith, "that what we eat in the eucharist is bread, but bread sanctified and made holy by prayer, and which, by the divine virtue that accompanies it sanctifieth all those who worthily receive it." He that would see more of this notion of the ancient fathers, and particularly those places of Justin Martyr and Irenæus, fully cleared and vindicated from the forced and absurd glosses of the Romanists, may consult my learned friend Mr. Grabe¹, in his notes upon Justin Martyr's First Apology, of his own edition, pp. 128, 129; but especially in his large and elaborate annotation upon Irenæus, lib. iv. cap. xxxiv.

I shall dismiss this article with this one only observation, that after the prodigious doctrine of Transubstantiation was confirmed by the first Lateran Council², there were many in the communion of the Church of Rome who could not digest it, did not in truth believe it, and wished from their hearts that their church had never defined it. For this we have the ample testimonies of very eminent writers of that church. "The conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood (saith Cajetan³), all of us do teach in words, but in deed many deny it, thinking nothing less⁴. These are diversely divided

¹ John Ernest Grabe, the editor of many learned works, particularly of the Septuagint, or Greek version of the Old Testament. He gave also an edition of Bishop Bull's works; and died in 1712, aged 46 years.

² Bishop Cosin, *ibid.* c. vii. n. 20, tells us, from Matthew Paris, that Innocent III. Bishop of Rome, and not the Council of Lateran, decreed the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation: Crakanthorpii, *ibid.* p. 570, &c. And the same is also evident, not only from Platina, but from other Romish writers. *Id.* p. 569, &c.

³ Thomas de Vio, called, from the place of his nativity, Cajetan, a celebrated Cardinal of the Roman Church. He wrote Commentaries on the Scriptures. The quotation here made is in part iii. question 75, article 1, of a Commentary on the Summ of Thomas Aquinas, a saint and voluminous writer of that church. Cajetan died in 1534, aged 66 years.

⁴ Burton's note, in p. 257, is—"Though they think they do not do it: *putante se non negare illam.*"

one from another; for some, by the conversion that is in the sacrament, understand nothing but identity of place, that is, that the blood is therefore said to be made the body of Christ, because where the bread is, the body of Christ becomes present also. Others understand by the word conversion nothing else but the order of succession; that is, that the body succeedeth, and is under the veils of accidents, under which the bread, which they suppose to be annihilated, was before." Occam¹ saith, "There are three opinions about transubstantiation, of which the first supposeth a conversion of the sacramental elements; the second the annihilation; the third affirmeth the bread to be in such manner transubstantiated into the body of Christ; that it is in no way changed in substance, or substantially converted into Christ's body, or doth cease to be, but only that the body of Christ in every part of it, becomes present in every part of the bread." Thomas of Walden², speaking of the sacrament of the eucharist, reports out of the book of Zacharias³, of Chrysopolis, "That there were some, perhaps many, but hardly to be discerned and noted, who thought still as Berangarius did." The same Thomas of Walden, in the

¹ In his *Centilogii* (conclus. t. xix. Occam was an Englishman, born in Surrey, and in his time esteemed a very considerable scholastic writer; one proof of which is the above work, consisting of one hundred conclusions on Speculative Theology. He died about 1387. Cave's *Historia Literaria*, tom. ii. append. pp. 28-29.

² This learned opponent of John Wiclif was born at Walden, in Essex, and thence so called. He wrote many works. The only printed one is directed principally against Wiclif: its title is, *A Doctrinale of the Antiquities of the Faith*; and the part quoted, as above, is tom. ii. c. xix. Of the Sacraments; and fol. 17 in the Paris edition of 1521, and also in Archbishop Usher's excellent work, *De Christianarum Ecclesiarum Successione et Statu*, c. vii. p. 97.—Londini, 1687. Walden died in the year 1430. Cave, *ibid.* p. 112.

³ Zacharias, as is said, was Bishop of Chrysopolis, in the Greek empire, about the year 1157. His work, referred to by Walden, under the title of *Quatuor unum*, is a Commentary upon the Harmony of the Gospels, by Ammonius, of Alexandria, and printed at Cologne, in Germany, in 1535, &c. Cave, *ibid.* tom. ii. p. 232.

same book, chap. lxiv. saith, "That some supposed the conversion that is in the sacrament, to be, in that the bread and wine are assumed into the unity of Christ's person; some thought it to be by way of impanation; and some by way of figurative and tropical appellation. The first and second of these opinions found the better entertainment in some men's minds, because they grant the essential presence of Christ's body, and yet deny not the presence of the bread still remaining, to sustain the appearing accidents. These opinions he reports to have been very acceptable to many, not without sighs, wishing the church had decreed that men should follow one of them."

It cannot be doubted but that there are, at this day, many in the communion of the Church of Rome, who are in the same perplexity about this article of Transubstantiation, and have the same wishes that their church had never made it an article of their faith; for the absurdities of Transubstantiation and the reason of mankind are still the same. Now what a lamentable condition are they in who are forced to profess (yea, and all ecclesiastics, now by the Trent Confession, in the most solemn manner to swear) that they believe what they cannot for their hearts believe; whose consciences, between the determination of their church and the dictates of their own reason, yea, and sense too, are continually ground as between two millstones¹! I have been long upon this article, but I shall be more brief on the next.

The next article is this: "I confess² also, that under one kind only, whole and entire Christ, and

¹ Dr. Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his *Treatise on Transubstantiation* (Gibson, *ibid.* title 7, p. 293, &c.) produces the authorities and confessions of several learned Romanists since the Council of Trent against this Romish doctrine: Picherellus, Doctor of the Sorbonne, at Paris; Cardinal Du Perron; De Marca, Abp. of Paris; Edmund, the Jesuit; Mons. de Marolles, &c.

² In the original, as before, Burton, p. 259. Appendix, to this treatise, p. 24, Article 6.

the whole sacrament is received." Now this article of the sufficiency of the sacrament of the eucharist, taken only in one kind, as it refers to and is designed to justify the practice of the Roman Church, in the constant and public administration of the sacrament to all the laity only in one kind, viz. the bread, denying them the cup, is manifestly against our Saviour's first institution of the sacrament, against apostolical practice, and the usage of the universal church of Christ for a thousand years, as is confessed by divers learned men of the Roman communion¹. And yet according to the Trent creed, all men are damned that do not assent to the insolent, and, as I may justly term it, antichristian decree of the Roman Church in this point². And who can without astonishment reflect on the stiffness, and obstinacy, and uncharitableness of the Trent fathers in this matter? Before they met, when it was noised that a council should be called to redress the manifold abuses and corruptions that were in the church, it was the longing expectation and earnest desire of many good men, that, amongst other things, the communion in both kinds might be restored to the laity. There were a multitude of pious souls, as it were upon their knees before them, thirsting after the cup of blessing, and earnestly begging for an entire sacrament³. But those hard-hearted fathers had no compassion on them, turned a deaf ear to their loud cries and supplications, only bidding them believe for the future (what they could not believe) that half the sacrament was every whit as good as the whole.

¹ Thomas Aquinas, a saint of the Roman Church, and Benaventure, a sainted Cardinal, write, that after the decree of Innocent, in 1215, just mentioned, the custom of communion in one kind only obtained; but it was not established by any Roman Council before that of Constance, in 1415.—Forbesii, *ibid.* lib. xi. c. xix. note 2, 3, &c.

² The Council of Trent, in its 21st Session, Canons 1, 2, 3, solemnly accuses all those who oppose communion in one kind.

³ The French and the Bohemians insisted, but to no purpose, upon the communion in both kinds, at the Council of Trent, in 1561.—Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent. London 1676, p. 429, &c.

Immediately follows this article¹: "I firmly hold that there is a purgatory, and that the souls detained there are relieved by the prayers of the faithful." Now this article of a purgatory after this life, as it is understood and taught by the Roman Church (that is, to be a place and state of misery and torment, whereinto many faithful souls go presently after death, and there remain till they are thoroughly purged from their dross, or delivered thence by masses, indulgences, &c.) is contrary to Scripture, and the sense of the Catholic Church for at least the first four centuries, as I have at large proved in a discourse concerning the "State of the Souls of Men in the interval between Death and the Resurrection²," which I am ready to communicate to Mons. le Meaux, if he shall desire it. Indeed the doctrine of purgatory is not only an error, but a dangerous one too, which I am verily persuaded hath betrayed a multitude of souls into eternal perdition, who might have escaped hell if they had not depended upon an aftergame in purgatory. But this article being very gainful to the Roman clergy, must above others be held fast, and constantly maintained and defended.—"I firmly³ hold it."

Prayers⁴ for the dead, as founded on the hypothesis of Purgatory (and we no otherwise reject them) fall together with it. The prayers for the dead used in the ancient church (those I mean that were more properly prayers, that is, either deprecations or petitions) were of two sorts, either the common and general commemoration of all the faithful at the oblation of the holy eucharist, or the particular prayers used at the funerals of any of the faithful lately deceased.

¹ Burton, p. 60, note (x) as before. Appendix, as before, Art. 7.

² See Bishop Bull's Works, as before, by Dr. Burton, vol. i. p. 72; Sermon iii. as referred to by the late editor, in vol. ii. p. 260. note (x).

³ *Constanter teneo.* Burton, p. 260, note (y).

⁴ Dr. Burton, in note (x) observes—"This passage, 'prayers for the dead, misery, and torment,' is taken almost literally from the third sera *in*, page 70," &c.

The former respected their final absolution, and the consummation of their bliss at the resurrection, like as that our church useth both in the office¹ for the Communion, and in that for the Burial of the Dead; which indeed seems to be no more than what we daily pray for in that petition of the Lord's prayer, (if we rightly understand it) "Thy kingdom come." The latter were also charitable omens, and good wishes of the faithful living, as it were accompanying the soul of the deceased to the joys of Paradise, of which they believed it already possessed, as the ancient author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy², in his last chapter of that book, plainly informs us. In a word, let any understanding and unprejudiced person attentively observe the prayers for the dead, in the most undoubtedly ancient liturgies, especially those in the Clementine Liturgy, and those mentioned in the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, and he will be so far from believing the Roman purgatory upon the account of those prayers, that he must needs see they make directly against it; for they all run (as even that prayer for the dead, which is unadvisably left by the Romanists in their own canon of the mass, as a testimony against themselves) in this form: "For all that are in peace or at rest in the Lord³." Now how can they be said "to be in peace or at rest in the

¹ See the Communion Service of the Church of England, in the prayers for the church militant, near the end,—“And we also bless Thy Holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear,” &c. Also the prayers following the Lord's prayer, at the Burial of the dead. See the Rev. Charles Wheatley's Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer, chap. vi. sect. xi. § 2, chap. xii. § iv. div. ii. § 2: Oxford, 1810. p. 285, &c. 490, &c. Bingham, as before, book xv. chap. iii. § 15; book xxiii. chap. iii. § 13.

² This work has been attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite (*Acts* xvii. 34) upon grounds not worth considering. Cardinal Bona, *ibid.* n. 5, argues feebly in favour of it: he says the first mention of it was in a Conference at Constantinople, in the year 532. See Cave's *Historia Literaria*, in tom. i. p. 225, &c.

³ Hospinian, *ibid.* tom. iii. has given the Canon of the Mass, with remarks. The portion spoken of by Bishop Bull is to be found in page 199, &c.

Lord," who are supposed to be in a state of misery and torment?

The next article is this: "As also that the saints reigning together with Christ, are to be venerated and invoked, and that they offer up prayers to God for us; and that their reliques are to be venerated¹." Now for the worship and invocation of saints deceased, there is no ground or foundation in the Holy Scriptures, no precept, no example. Nay, it is by evident consequence forbidden in the prohibition of the worship and invocation of angels, Col. ii. v. 18, with which text compare the 35th canon of the Council of Laodicea, and the judgment of the learned father Theodoret² concerning it, who flourished shortly after that council. He in his notes upon that text of St. Paul, hath these express words, "The synod³ met at Laodicea in Phrygia, made a law forbidding men to pray even to the angels." See also Zonaras⁴ upon the same canon. He as well as Theodoret long before him, rightly judged, that both in the text of St. Paul, and in the Laodicean canon, all prayers to angels are forbidden⁵. Now if we must not pray to angels, then much less may we pray to saints. The angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them

¹ See the original in Burton's edition, p. 262, note (z). Appendix as before. Art. 8.

² Theodoret, a most learned writer of the ancient Christian Church; besides his Commentaries on the Scriptures, he is now principally known for his Ecclesiastical History, extending from A.D. 322 to 427; of which there is an English abridgement by Parker, London 1729. Theodoret was Bishop of Cyrus, in his native country, Syria; and died about A.D. 457, aged 70 years and upwards. Cave, as before, t. i. pp. 405, 406.

³ Burton as before, for the original Greek, note (a), p. 262.

⁴ John Zonaras, here spoken of, was first secretary of state to the Greek emperor, but afterwards entered upon the monastical life. His Commentaries upon the Councils, &c. are included in the 1st volume of Bishop Beveridge's *Pandectæ Canonum*; he flourished (says Cave, t. ii. as above, p. 201.) in the year 1118.

⁵ Bishop Beveridge, *ibid.* p. 196, on this canon of the Council of Laodicea, in A.D. 367, (as Cave thinks,) has in his annotation given the words of Theodoret: in the first volume of his *Pandectæ Canonum*, p. 468, &c. will be found the words of Zonaras alluded to.

who shall be heirs of salvation: they watch over us, and are frequently present with us, nay, they are (internuncii) messengers between God and us, conveying God's blessings to us, and our prayers to God. "And when he (Cornelius) looked on him (an angel) he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." Acts x. 4. "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." Apoc. viii. 3; none of which things are any where affirmed of the deceased saints. And yet we must not pray, even to the angels.

Hear also Origen, who lived long before the Laodicean Council, delivering the sense of the Church of his time in this matter, in his fifth book against Celsus,¹ where he excellently discourseth against the religious worship and invocation of angels; in opposition to which, he first lays down this as a received doctrine among all Catholic Christians; "That all prayers, all supplications, deprecations, and thanksgivings, are to be offered to God the Lord of all, by the chief high Priest, who is above all angels, the living Word, and God²." And presently after, he shows the folly and unreasonableness of praying to angels upon several accounts. As first, because the particular knowledge of angels, and what offices they severally perform, is a secret which we cannot reach to; which is the very reason which St. Paul suggests in the text before-mentioned, that whosoever worships and invokes the angels, doth intrude into those things which he hath not seen³. From whence we may

¹ In the Cambridge edition, p. 233. Bishop Bull is in this, as well as in the last section, much indebted to Bishop Beveridge, in the place last quoted.

² The original Greek, in Burton's edition, p. 263, note (b.)

³ See as before, note (c.)

easily gather, that Origen in this discourse of his, had an eye to that text of St. Paul, and understood it as we do, to be a prohibition of all prayer, to angels. 2. He argues that if we should suppose that we could attain such particular knowledge of the angels, yet it would not be lawful for us to pray to them, or any other, save to God the Lord of all, who alone is all sufficient, abundantly able to supply all our wants and necessities, through our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, his Word, Wisdom, and Truth. Lastly, He reasons to this effect, that the best way to gain the good will of those blessed spirits, is not to pray to them, but to imitate them by paying our devotions to God alone, as they do. Hear the same Origen¹ where to Celsus talking of those spirits that preside over the affairs of men here below, who were thought to be appeased only by prayers to them in a barbarous language, he answers with derision, and tells him, he forgot with whom he had to do, and that he was speaking to Christians, who pray to God alone through Jesus². And then he adds, that the genuine Christians in their prayers to God, use no barbarous words, but pray to him in the language of their respective countries, the Greek Christians in the Greek tongue, the Romans in the Roman language, as knowing that the God to whom they prayed, understood all tongues and languages, and heard and accepted their prayers in their several languages, as well as if they had addressed themselves to him in one and the same language. Again in the same book, p. 420, to Celsus discoursing much after the same rate he gives this excellent answer: "The one God is to be atoned by us, the Lord of all, and must be entreated, to be propitious to us, piety and prayers being the best means of appeasing Him. And if Celsus would have others applied to after him, let him assure himself, that

¹ Book viii. p. 402, Cambridge edition.

² Burton for the original, p. 264, note (d).

as the body's motion unavoidably moves its shadow, so likewise when God is once become propitious to any, all his angels, souls, and spirits, will become friends to such an one¹." From these testimonies of Origen, to which more might be added, it is very evident that the Catholic Christians of his time, made no prayers either to angels or saints, but directed all their prayers to God, through the alone mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Indeed, against the invocation of angels and saints, we have the concurrent testimonies of all the Catholic fathers of the first three centuries at least. For as to that testimony of Justin Martyr, in his second (or rather first) Apology for the Christians, p. 56, alleged by Bellarmine², and others of his party, for the worshipping of angels as practised in the primitive times of the church: I have given a clear account of it, in my defence of the Nicene Creed, § 2, &c. where I have evidently proved that place³ of Justin to be so far from giving any countenance to the religious worship of angels, that it makes directly against it. And the like may be easily shown of the other allegations of Bellarmine out of the primitive fathers⁴.

To conclude, look into the most ancient liturgies,

¹ Burton gives the original, p. 265, note.

² Robert Bellarmine, a cardinal of the Roman Church, and one of its most learned and zealous defenders, is principally known for his great work on the Controversies concerning the Christian's faith against the Heretics of this time; in 4 vols. fol. To him on several important points, Whitaker and Rainolds replied, among others of our own Church; but perhaps the fullest reply is that of Chamier, in his *Panstratia Catholica*, printed at Geneva, in 1629, &c. But the English reader will find sufficient for his purpose, in the collection of tracts, by Bishop Gibson, already mentioned. Bellarmine died A. D. 1621, aged 79.

³ In vol. v. part i. p. 194, &c. of Dr. Burton's edition. The place of Justin referred to, the English reader will find in Reeves's translation of the Apologies of Justin Martyr. Tertullian and Minutius Felix, &c. London, 1716, vol. i. p. 21, 22, together with some useful observations.

⁴ The place of Bellarmine, referred to, is in his controversies, t. ii. De Sanctorum Beatitudine, l. i. c. viii. particularly the section beginning, Argumentum quartum.

as particularly that described in the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, and the Clementine Liturgy, contained in the book intituled, the Apostolical Constitutions¹; and you will not find in them one prayer of any sort to angels or saints, no not so much as an oblique prayer, (as they term it,) *i. e.* a prayer directed to God, that he would hear the intercession of angels and saints, for us. And yet after all this, they are for ever damned by the Trent Creed, who do not hold and practise the invocation of the saints deceased. For this is one of the articles of that creed, without the belief whereof, they tell us none can be saved²: That is, all are damned who pray unto God alone through Christ the mediator, as the Scripture directs, and the Catholic Church of the first and best ages hath practised.

As to what follows, that the saints departed do offer up their prayers to God for us; if it be understood of the intercession of the saints in general, we deny it not. But this is no reason why we should pray to them to pray for us. Nay, on the contrary, if the deceased saints do of their own accord, and out of their perfect charity, pray for us, what need we be so solicitous to call upon them for their prayers, especially, when our reason and Scripture also tell us, that we are out of their hearing, and that they do not, cannot know our particular wants and necessities? For, as to what the Romanists tell us of the glass of the Trinity³, and extraordinary revelations, they are bold, presumptuous conjectures, destitute of

¹ The above, as also some other things, which profess to owe their original to the times of the Apostles, were indeed the productions of an early age of the Church; but they were very soon corrupted, in various ways, as Cave (as above, t. i. p. 29. when speaking of Clemens of Rome) observes. The English reader may consult Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, v. i. century 1. part ii. chap. ii. § 19. p. 110, &c. London, 1811, under Clemens.

² Hurton, as before, p. 266, for the original.

³ See Dr. Freeman's (Dean of Peterborough) Texts Examined, concerning the worship of saints and angels, in Gibson, *ibid.* v. title 6. p. 225.

any ground or colour from reason or Scripture, and indeed are inconsistent with one another. To be sure, that conceit of the glass of the Trinity, would never have passed with the fathers of the first ages: for they generally held, that the souls of the righteous (some indeed excepted of the souls of the martyrs) do not presently after death ascend to the third heaven, but go^a to a place and state of inferior bliss and happiness, (which they commonly call by the name of paradise, though where it is situated they do not all agree,) and there remain till the resurrection of their bodies: after which, they shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, and there for ever enjoy that consummate bliss and happiness which consists in that clear vision of God, which the holy Scripture calls seeing him face to face¹: and indeed, their distinction of paradise, (the receptacle of holy souls presently after death,) from the third heaven, seems to have firm ground in the New Testament;—"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke xxiii. 43. —"I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter;" (2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4. and Grotius upon the places²;) and was undoubtedly received

¹ Consult Archbishop Usher's Answer to a Jesuit, c. ix. Of Prayer to Saints, in the section, "Now that divers of the Chief Doctors." The University of Cambridge has lately reprinted this excellent work.

² See Grotius and other commentators in Poli Synopsis on Luke xxiii. 43. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4. Hugo Grotius, a native of Holland, was one the most learned men of his age, as his Commentaries on the Scriptures evince. In doctrine, however, making every allowance for those who were opposed to him, it must be conceded, that he verged, occasionally at least, towards Socinianism and Popery. See Gale's Court of the Gentiles, part iii. in the preface, to-

in the Church of God before the coming of the Lord in the flesh. However, this was a current doctrine in the Christian Church for many ages; till, at length the popish Council of Florence boldly determined the contrary; defining¹, "That those souls, which having contracted the blemish of sin, being either in their bodies or out of them, purged from it, are presently received into heaven, and there clearly behold God himself, one God in three persons, as he is." This decree they craftily made, partly to establish the superstition of praying to saints deceased, whom they would make us to believe to see and know all our necessities and concerns in the glass of the Trinity, as was said before, and so to be fit objects of our religious invocation; partly and chiefly to confirm the doctrine of Purgatory, and that the prayers of the ancient Church for the dead, might be thought to be founded upon a supposition that the souls of some, nay, most faithful persons after death, go into a place of grievous torment, out of which they may be delivered by the prayers, masses, and alms of the living. But this by the way.

It is added in the Creed, that not only the saints themselves, but also their reliques are to be worshipped. A strange definition of the Trent fathers, especially if we consider the time when it was made; a time when the best and wisest men in the Roman communion sadly complained of the vile cheat put upon the poor ignorant people, by showing them I know not what reliques of saints, and drawing them to the worship of them, only for gain's sake, and to pick

wards the end; Richard Baxter's *Grotian Religion Discovered*; and Rivet's works, vol. iii. p. 925, &c. Rotæfodami, 1660. The work for which Grotius is best known at this day, and most useful in its kind, is that of the *Truth of the Christian Religion*, frequently printed in English. He died in 1645, aged 62.

¹ See Carrausæ Epitome Summa Conciliorum p. 648. Duaci, 1659, &c. Usher, *ibid.* Crakanthorpii, *ibid.* p. 159, &c. from which latter and Stillingfleet's *Grounds of the Protestant Religion*, in his *concepts*, p. 23, &c. it is evident that the determination, so called, of the Council of Florence, 1439, were nothing more than that of the Bishop of Rome.

their pockets. Hear the judgment of the learned and pious Cassander¹ as to this article. "Seeing there are a small number of true and approved reliques, especially in these provinces, and many of those which are made show of, are too apparently liable to suspicion, and the frequenting and veneration of them is of little service to true piety and devotion, though of very much to superstition or gain; it seems to me much more proper, that all such ostentation of miracles were forborne, and the people were invited to worship the true reliques of saints; that is, the examples of piety and virtue they have left behind them for our imitation, as is recorded in what has been written either by them, or of them²."

The next article of the Trent Creed is this:—"I most firmly assert that the images of Christ, and the ever Virgin Mother of God, and other saints, are to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given them³." A doughty article indeed, worthy to be ushered in with, a—"I most firmly assert!" But is this really an article of the Catholic Christian faith, without the belief whereof there is no salvation? What then is become again of the Catholic Church of the first three centuries and downward? For it is certain, that the Church of those days never allowed the use of images in her oratories or conventicles, much less the adoration and worship of them⁴. This appears from what we read of Adrian, the Roman

¹ George Cassander, a learned member of the Roman Church; a native of Flanders. He was desirous of composing the differences between the Protestants and Romanists, but in this matter he was far from succeeding, for, not to speak further, his works were condemned by the Church of Rome. He died in 1566, aged 52 years. See Du Pin, as before, vol. iii. p. 700. Rivet as quoted in last note; the Roman Index of Alexander VII. Romæ, 1667.

² In Cassander's Consultation, Art. 21. De Veneratione Reliquiarum; at the end, Cum igitur veræ. See the original given by Burton, in note, p. 268, &c.

³ Burton, as before, p. 269. Appendix, as before, Art. 9.

⁴ On the worship of images. See Whitby's Tract, in Gibson, *ibid.* vol. ii. title 6. p. 244. Dallæi de Imaginibus, Lib. Lugd. Bat. 1642.

emperor, related by Ælius Lampridius in the *Life of Alexander Severus*¹, c. xliii, that he favouring the Christians, and willing to gratify them in their way of worship, commanded that they should have temples built for them without any images in them; as well knowing their utter aversion to the setting up of images in the places of their religious worship. This also more plainly appears from the writings of the Christian apologists of those times against the heathens objecting to them, that they had no images that they worshipped, and consequently, that they were atheists and worshipped no God at all; for they thought there could be no religious worship of anything, without some visible image of the object to be worshipped, and finding no image at all, of any sort, in the oratories of the Christians, they concluded that the Christians worshipped no deity. Now our apologists are so far from pleading to this objection, that the Christians had images in their places of worship, that they answer without any distinction, by way of concession, and that not only granting that they had no images, but affirming they ought not to have them, and condemned the Gentiles which had. See Minutius Felix², Arnobius, and Lactantius³.

¹ Dallæi, *ibid.* p. 54, has given the original; also Casaubon's note on Lampridius may be consulted. Adrian or Hadrian, the Roman emperor, built a wall in Britain to shut out the northern incursions; he died A. D. 138, aged 71. Severus, another emperor of Rome, was also engaged in a like work; and died at York, A. D. 211, aged 65. Lampridius wrote in the fourth century the lives of some of the Roman emperors.

² Minutius Felix was probably an African, and wrote about the year 220, a dialogue called *Octavius*. It has been translated into English. Arnobius, also an African, flourished about A. D. 303; his work against the Gentiles, exposes irreligion and ridicules the heathen gods. Lactantius, styled the Christian Cicero, on account of his eloquence, a contemporary of Arnobius; he wrote several works against the heathens, particularly that of the *Deaths of the Persecutors*, which has been more than once translated into English. See &c. *ve*, tom. i. as above, p. 101, 161, &c. Dr. Burton, in p. 270; notes, ter a, to Minutius Felix, p. 91, to Arnobius VI. init. to Lactantius II. 2. conce, for various passages from those and other fathers, see Whitby, p. 225, &c. 257, &c. Daille, *ibid.* book i. c. ii. &c. Crakanthorpe, *ibid.* use, &c.

In the fourth century, indeed, there were some attempts to bring in pictures into the Christian oratories, but they were presently checked and repressed by the governors of the church, as appears from the thirty-sixth canon of the Council of Eliberis¹ in Spain, and from the relation which Epiphanius² gives us (who flourished towards the end of the fourth century), in his epistle to John Bishop of Jerusalem, translated by St. Jerome³ out of Greek into Latin, in the second volume of his works; where he tells John of Jerusalem, that going into a church in the village of Anablatha to pray, he found there a picture hanging up, which (though it were out of his own diocese) he cut in pieces, as being scandalous and contrary to the holy Scriptures; and desires John to take care for the future, that no such pictures be hung up in any church under his jurisdiction. The words of Epiphanius are these: "At my entrance into the church to pray, I saw there a veil hanging within the doors of the same church, dyed and painted, and having the image as it were of Christ, or some saint, for I do not well remember whose it was. When therefore I had seen this image of a man hanging in the Church of Christ, against the authority of the Scriptures, I tore it in pieces, and advised the keepers of the place to wrap therewith a poor dead man, and carry him to burial in it. And whereas they on the other hand murmured, saying, that if he would tear the veil, he ought in justice to change it,

¹ This Council of Eliberis or Elvira, took place in, or about, A.D. 305. Du Pin, the French Romanist, in his notice of this council, t. i. p. 593, as before, allows that the Church had then no pictures. See Cave, t. i. p. 349. The English reader will be gratified by consulting Bingham, b. viii. c. viii. § 6. on this subject.

² Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus; author, among others, of a very celebrated work on heresies. He died, A.D. 402, aged nearly, if not upwards of, 100 years. Cave, t. i. p. 232.

³ Jerome was one of the most learned and celebrated fathers of the Christian Church. His Commentaries on the Scriptures, Epistles, &c. have come down to us. He died in his 91st year, A.D. 420, at Jerusalem. Cave, as above, p. 268.

and give them another for it: I no sooner heard this, but I promised to give them one, and that I would send it presently. However, some little time past, whilst I was seeking after the best veil, to send them it; for I thought I must send one from Cyprus. But now I have sent such as I could meet with; and I beseech thee, command the presbyters of that place to receive the veil we have sent from the bearer, and to command for the future, that no such veils as are contrary to our religion, be hung up in the Church of Christ. For it becomes thy worth to have the greater care in this respect, that thou mayest take away all such scrupulosity as is unworthy of the Christian Church, and the people committed to thy charge." The authority of this epistle is vindicated from the cavils of Bellarmin, by the learned Andrew Rivet, in his *Sacred Critic*¹. How would the zeal of this great and good bishop have been inflamed, if he had seen what we now-a-days see, not only pictures, but massy images in churches, and people praying, kneeling, and burning incense before them.

By what means Image worship² in after ages entered into the church is not so easy to tell; nor is it very necessary. But this is certain, that about the beginning of the eighth century, it had gotten great ground. For in the year of our Lord 754, in the reign of Constantine, nick-named Copronymus, a

¹ *Criticæ Sacr. Spec. lib. iii. cap. xxix.* Rivet's works were published in 3 vol. fol. at Rotterdam:—the place quoted will be found in vol. ii. p. 1124, &c. The passage itself is given by Whitby, *ibid.* p. 271, and Daille, *ibid.* b. ii. c. iv. p. 170, &c. Dr. Burton, as before, p. 271, note. As Dr. Bull refers to him, we may observe, that Andrew Rivet was a Frenchman by birth, and a professor of the university of Leyden. Beside his *Catholicus Orthodoxus*, and *Sacred Critic*, he wrote largely upon the holy Scriptures, and died in 1651, aged 78 years. See *Oratio Funebris*, &c. prefixed to vol. iii. of his works.

² For ordinary purposes, Whitby and Daille will be sufficient, with respect to the subject of images. Other tracts by Dean Comber and Mr. Gee (in Gibson's Collection, *ibid.*) following Whitby's; Rainold's *de Idololatria*, Molinæ's *de Imaginibus*, &c. may be added.

General Council was convened at Constantinople, consisting of three hundred and thirty-eight bishops, declaring itself the Seventh General Council¹. This synod expressly condemned all worship of images, decreeing it to be abominable; and that all images, of whatsoever matter or colour they were made, should be cast out of all Christian churches². And presently after, they decree severe punishments to any man that should dare from thenceforward to make, worship, or set up in the church, or in his own house, any such image, as being a transgressor of the commandment of God, and an enemy to the doctrine of the fathers. Where observe, that the bishops of this council condemn all image-worship, as contrary both to Scripture, and also to the doctrine of the fathers of the Church that were before them, as indeed we have already shown it to be. In this council, Germanus³, bishop of Constantinople, Georgius Cyprius, and Damascene, a monk, who were the chief sticklers for image-worship, were excommunicated.

About thirty years after, viz. A.D. 787, another council met at Constantinople⁴ first, and was afterwards translated to Nice, in which the decree of the former synod was exploded, and image-worship first established in the Church. This council was called by the Empress Irene, a bigoted image-worshipper: she had so great an influence upon this synod, that partly by her persuasions, partly by her threatenings,

¹ Vide Syn. Constantinople in Act. Syn. Nic. ii. p. 621. Edit. Col. An. 1618.

² Ibid. p. 965.

³ Germanus was deprived of his bishopric in 730, by the Greek emperor, Leo, and died about ten years after. John Damascenus, so called from the place of his birth, Damascus, died about the year 750; he was the author of many works, of which a large portion is extant. Concerning the above Council of Constantinople, see Cave, as before, t. i. p. 646, and also as to Germanus, and John of Damascus, pp. 621, 624.

⁴ Cave, t. i. p. 649, gives the history and transactions of this council.

several bishops, who in the former synod had condemned image-worship, were now for it. Among these, Basilius, Bishop of Ancyra, Theodorus, Bishop of Myra, and Theodosius, Bishop of Amorium, were brought in as public pageants¹, and offered to this council their letters supplicant, confessing that they had sinned in condemning the worship of images in the synod convened by Constantinus Copronymus: 'A woman did the deed². It was a woman that first brought this childish worship (the great Hincmar³ of Rheims calls it baby-worship⁴) into the Church of Christ. The bishops in this synod, being destitute of Scripture proof and authentic tradition for their image-worship, betook themselves to certain apocryphal and ridiculous stories, as Charles the Great observed. For in this synod, a letter from Adrian⁵,

¹ Pompæ Circenses.

² Dux fœmina facti. Irene, here spoken of, was one of the most flagitious characters in history. In her furious zeal to advance image-worship, she poisoned her own husband Leo, the emperor, and caused her own son's eyes to be put out. The Church of England, in its Homily on the Peril of Idolatry, part ii. p. 186, &c., London, 1817, has spoken its judgment of her. See Du Pin, as before, vol. ii. p. 33, note (e) by the English editor. Gibson's Collection, vol. ii. title 6, p. 283, for what Comber has said: Mosheim, vol. ii. cent. 8, part ii. chap. iii. § 13, p. 265, &c.

³ Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, in France; flourished in the year 845. His writings, of which many survive, show that he was fully deserving of the great character bestowed upon him. Cave, t. ii. pp. 33, 34, &c.

⁴ Puparum cultum.

⁵ Caroli Magni (de Imaginibus), lib. iii. c. iii. Dr. Burton, as before, p. 274, gives the original. Charles, not only King of France, but Emperor of the West, was the son of Pepin, who had been mayor of the palace to Childerick, whom he deposed, in order to reign in his stead over the French. Charles was born in the year 747, and died in 814, in the 65th year of his age. In his work against images, here mentioned, of which Daille has given an interesting abridgment (as before, b. iv. c. ii. p. 368, &c.), it is generally considered that he made great use of the learning and abilities of Alcuinus. Cave, t. i. pp. 633, 634. Mosheim, b. ii. cent. 8, part ii. chap. ii. § 7, p. 229, &c.

⁶ Adrian, or Hadrian, Bishop of Rome; this great patron of image-worship died in the year 795. Cave, as before, p. 635.

Bishop of Rome, to Constantine and Irène, was produced, and openly read, full of the most ridiculous fables, as particularly concerning the leprosy of Constantine the Great¹ before his conversion; the barbarous remedy that he sought after by the blood of innocent babes; the appearing of St. Peter and St. Paul to him in a dream, advising him to send for Pope Sylvester, who, upon we know not what persecution raised by Constantine against the Christians, was fled with his clergy to the mountain Soracte, and there hid themselves in the caves thereof; that when Sylvester came to him, he commanded his deacons to produce the images of St. Peter and Paul, which as soon as the emperor saw, he cried out aloud, These are the very images I saw in my dream; I am convinced, I believe, and desire the laver of baptism; which, when he had received, he was immediately cured of his leprosy: that thereupon, in gratitude for the benefit he had received, he ordered churches to be built for the Christians, whose walls and pillars should be adorned with the holy images of Christ and the saints. Was there ever such a legend offered to a synod of bishops? And yet this letter of Adrian was accepted, and approved of by the whole council. Had none of them read the Life of Constantine, written by Eusebius?

Wherefore, about seven years after, viz. A.D. 794, this Nicene Synod was condemned, and abdicated, by a council of about three hundred bishops convened at Frankfort² by Charles the Great, King of France. In this synod, were present not only the bishops of France but also of Germany and Lom-

¹ The English reader, who has the opportunity, should not neglect perusing Comber's *Roman Forgeries in the Councils, &c.* (Gibson, vol. iii. title xi. p. 64, &c.) where the trash and trumpery here related by interested papists, are exposed to deserved contempt. Also Basinge's *Annal. Politico-Ecclesiast.*, t. i. p. 683, &c.

² Frankfort on the Main, in Germany. Cave, t. i. p. 652. Homily of the Church of England, as before, p. 190.

bardy, as provinces subdued to the King of France. Pope Adrian also sent his legates thither; and the Great Charles himself honoured this council with his presence.

The Romanists are hard put to it to ward the stroke of this council against the worshippers of images. They have several evasions. Genebrard¹ and Bellarmine tells us, that the fathers at Frankfort mistook the meaning of the second Nicene Council, as thinking they had decreed, "The worship due to God alone²," to be given to the images of the saints, which they were very far from doing. But it is far more probable that Genebrard and Bellarmine were both grossly mistaken. There were assembled in this council almost all the learned bishops of the West; they had the acts of the second Nicene synod before them, and diligently perused them, and upon examination condemned them as to the point of image-worship. Besides, our Alcuinus³, the emperor's tutor, the most learned man of that age, had before so fully examined the Nicene acts, that he wrote a learned discourse against them, and notably refuted them, as we shall hear by and by. Lastly it is certain that the fathers of the council of Frankfort did not condemn only the highest degree of religious worship⁴ to be given to images, but all manner of religious worship.

¹ Genebrardi, lib. iii. chronolog. ann. 794. Bellarmini de Imaginibus, lib. ii. c. xiv. in his Disputationes, vol. ii. Genebrard was a learned Frenchman of the Roman communion; he wrote many works beside the one here referred to, and died in 1597, aged 60 years. Du Pin, as before, vol. iii. p. 754. Dr. Burton, in his note (p), p. 275, to Genebrard, refers to lib. iii. chron. an. 790.

² Dr. Burton, as above, note (r), adds the original, cultum latræ.

³ Alcuinus or Albinus Flaccus, an Englishman, one of the most learned men of his period. He was the scholar of Bede, the friend and companion of Charles the Great, whom he accompanied to the Council of Frankfort. His works are stated by Cave, l. i. p. 637, &c. who also informs us, that he died in the year 804.

⁴ The Roman Church divides its religious worship, according to the object to which it is given, thus: latræ, the highest degree of worship to God, and therein to Jesus Christ; and also to Jesus

Others¹ therefore tell us, that they who urge the testimony of the Frankfort synod against image-worship are utterly mistaken; that the synod which the fathers at Frankfort condemned was not the Council of Nice, but that of Constantinople under Constantinus Copronymus; that the Frankfort synod perfectly agreed with the fathers of the Nicene Council, and confirmed the worship of images. This is strange news indeed, but it is far from being true. The mistake of those writers who tell us this (if it were a mistake in them, and not a wilful prevarication) arose from hence, that the synod which established image-worship met first (as I noted before) at Constantinople, though it was afterwards translated to Nice; and so might be truly said to be a council convened at Constantinople, and thereupon be mistaken for that Council of Constantinople, which was convened by Constantinus Copronymus, which was indeed confirmed by the Frankfort fathers. But that it was the second Council of Nice that was condemned by the synod at Frankfort, and that upon this very account, that it had introduced image-worship into the church, we have abundant evidence.

For this is testified not only by Walafridus Strabo²,

Christ, as present in the host; and to the cross:—hyperdulia, worship of an inferior degree to the virgin:—dulia, the lowest grade of the three; to the saints and angels. See Bellarmine, as before, tom. i. *De Sanctorum Beatitudine*, lib. i. c. xii. &c. Stillingfleet's works, vol. v. p. 476, &c. The various pieces in Gibson's Collection, vols. ii. and iii., &c.

¹ Surius in adm. ad Lect. pro Syn. Frank. Coriolanus in Con. Frank. ad An. 794. Dr. Burton, p. 275, note (s), refers to Surius, vol. iii. p. 226. Lawrence Surius, a German and Carthusian monk, published an edition of the councils, among other things, which edition of the councils is here referred to. He died at Cologne in 1578, aged 56 years. The edition of the councils by Coriolanus was published at Antwerp, in 1623.

² Walafridus Strabo, a learned man, the disciple of Rabanus Maurus, is best known for his work *On Divine Offices*, which has been several times printed. He died in 849. Ado, of Vienne, an

but also by Ado of Vienne, and Regino of Prom, in their histories; with whom Conrade, abbot of Usperg, agrees in his Chronicle, where he thus writes: "In the year 793, whilst Charles was celebrating the feast of Easter in France, a numerous synod of bishops was gathered together out of all the provinces of the realm, the legates of Pope Adrian were there also in his stead. In this synod the heresy of a certain bishop named Felix, was condemned.—The synod likewise, which a few years before met at Constantinople, under Irene and Constantine her son, and was called the Seventh General Council, was universally renounced as useless, that so it might neither be styled the seventh, nor by any other name¹." That the council here said to be condemned by the Frankfort synod was the second Council of Nice is evident, for it is expressly said to be the council convened under the Empress Irene and Constantine her son, and that but a few years before. But it is said to be convened at Constantinople, because there indeed it first met, as was noted before.

Add to this the testimony of Hincmar of Rheims, an author in all respects most worthy of credit in this matter: "In the time of the Emperor Charlemagne, a general synod was held in France by order of the apostolic see, the said emperor convening it. And according to the direction of the holy Scriptures, and the tradition of the ancients, the Greek synod was condemned and wholly laid aside. Of the condemnation whereof, a volume of no small size was sent from the same emperor to Rome, by some of the bishops,

archbishop of France, wrote a Breviary of Chronicles, and died, A. D. 875. Regino, abbot of Prom, wrote a like work; he flourished in 892. Conrade, abbot of Usperg in Germany, died A. D. 1240. He was noble by birth; his chronicle is compiled from various preceding writers. Cave, as before, tom. ii. pp. 31, 51, 68, 286.

¹ Dr. Burton gives the original passage of Conrade of Usperg, in p. 277, note (t).

and I myself have read it in the palace in my young days¹."

In the same chapter he afterwards adds, "Wherefore by the authority of this synod, the worship of images was somewhat restrained: yet not so, but that Adrian and the other bishops persevered in their opinion; and after the death of Charles, most earnestly promoted their puppet-worship; insomuch that Lewis², Charles's son wrote a book, wherein he fell much sharper upon the worship of images than his father had done."

With what indignation and abhorrence the decree of the pretended Nicene synod was received by our British Church, our historians tell us. Hear Roger Hoveden³: "Charles⁴, King of France, sent the book of the council, directed to himself from Constantinople, into Britain, in which book, alas! alas! many things were found unagreeable, and contrary to the true faith; especially, that by the unanimous assertion of almost all the eastern doctors, that is to say, of no less than three hundred or more bishops, the

¹ Burton, as before, notes (*u*) and (*x*), p. 278. Hincmar, Rhem. advers. Hincmar, Laudon, cap. xx. (Op. vol. ii. p. 457).

² Michael Balbus, the Greek emperor, having written to Louis the Pious, the son and successor of Charles the Great, on the subject of images, the book here mentioned was compiled and sent to the Bishop of Rome, in the name of Louis and the bishops of France, who met in council at Paris, A. D. 824. In this work, Louis, as his father Charles, shows himself desirous of retaining images for historical remembrance only, and no other purpose. Cave, t. ii. p. 72. Daille, l. iv. c. vi. p. 491, &c.

³ Part i. Annal. ad ann. 792. Matth. West. ad ann. 793. Hoveden, here mentioned, flourished, A. D. 1198, in the reign of Henry II. to whom he was chaplain; afterwards he became professor of divinity in the University of Oxford. His Annals were printed at London, in 1595, &c. Cave, t. ii. p. 255. Matthew of Westminster, a monk of the abbey there, flourished in 1377. His work, *The Flowers of History*, here referred to, owes most of its matter to Matthew, surnamed Paris, although an Englishman by birth, a learned monk of St. Alban's Abbey, in 1240. Cave, as before, app. p. 76. t. ii. p. 298. Consult also Bishop Tanner's excellent *Bibliotheca*, regarding these and other British and English writers.

⁴ Dr. Burton, as usual, gives the original, p. 279, note.

worship of images was confirmed: which the Church of God utterly abominated. Against which, Alcuinus wrote an epistle¹ wonderfully supported with authorities out of the Holy Scriptures, and brought it with the same book to the King of France, in the name of our bishops and princes.

From whence it appears, that the Nicene Acts sent from Constantinople to Charles the Great, were by him before the Frankfort synod first sent to Britain; and being examined, and abundantly refuted, and that from the holy Scriptures, by our most learned Alcuinus, were carried back again, together with that refutation of them, to the emperor in the name of our bishops and princes: so that even then, the British² Church was protestant in this article concerning image worship.

And indeed, I am persuaded that no man of judgment and integrity, that hath been conversant in the Holy Scriptures, and in the writings of the more ancient doctors of the church, will be able to read those acts of the pretended Synod of Nice, without indignation and abhorrence of it, when he observes upon what ridiculous fables, gross misinterpretations of Scripture, falsifications, and impertinent allegations of the ancient fathers, the bishops of that convention built their decree concerning image worship. Notwithstanding all this, the bishops at Trent chose to follow that wretched synod, and have decreed, and that as an article of faith, most firmly to be asserted, that the images of Christ and the saints are to be retained, yea, and worshipped too³. May not one presume to ask why? What necessity is there of this? Cannot the Church of Christ be as well with-

¹ On this subject consult Bishop Tanner, as just cited, in p. 21, note (y), and the words of Leland there referred to.

² In proof of Bishop Bull's assertion, see Archbishop Usher's work, already referred to, c. ii. pp. 19, 20, where the original work of Hoveden, Matthew of Westminster, and others are quoted.

³ See Council of Trent, session 25. Decree of Invocation, &c. The words commencing with, "*Imagines porro Christi.*"

out these images, and this image-worship now, as it was in the more ancient¹ and purer times of it? Nay, may we not farther ask, what good use at all can be made of these images and this image-worship? The answer of the Romanists here is, that these images are books² fit to instruct the ignorant laity that cannot read the Holy Scriptures, and apt to raise devotion in them. But to this plea for image-worship, made use of by Wading, a Jesuit of Antwerp, his learned antagonist returns this excellent answer, with which I shall conclude what I have to say upon this article³: "I deny not but images may be of use to the stupid vulgar, who are led only by their senses, for raising their devotion at the sight of them: but see, I pray thee, whether many more and greater disadvantages are not to be feared from the use and worship of them. For in the first place, it is scarce possible but that the ignorant and profane vulgar will be apt hence to imbibe filthy and sordid notions of God and the saints, will depend upon these images and statues as their tutelar gods, will pay them as

¹ Petavius the Jesuit, one of the most learned members the Roman Church ever had; and who died in 1652, aged 69 years, thus speaks on this subject; "*It is certain* that images of Christ, and especially statues, were not substituted during the first ages of the church, in the place of idols, nor set forth for the veneration of the faithful." See his *Dogmata Theologica*, lib. xv. chap. xiii. n. 3, &c.

² *Libri Laicorum, et Idiotarum.*

³ *Episcopii Resp. ad Epist. Pet. Wadingi de cultu Imag.* cap. 8. Dr. Burton gives the original at length, p. 282, *note*. Simon Episcopius, a native of Amsterdam, and an Arminian or Remonstrant divine, of considerable learning; but to whom Dr. Bull was opposed, concerning our Saviour's divinity, as it regards certain particulars, at least. He died in 1643, aged 60. Peter Wading, his antagonist, was by birth an Irishman, as Alegambe states in his *Bibliotheca*, or *Lives of the Jesuits*; he wrote in the seventeenth century. Concerning these two writers, see Bull's *Life*, in Dr. Burton's edition, pp. 257, 314, and in other places in his works.

⁴ The heathen had their various gods, who presided over their various countries, professions, trades, &c: these were their tutelary or protecting divinities. Louis Vives, a very learned Romanist, who lived in the sixteenth century, and was tutor to our popish and persecuting Queen Mary, thus speaks in his notes on St. Augustine's

bad or worse adoration than the heathens paid to their abominations: and lastly, will grow mere brutes by using images instead of books, as if there were no need of understanding more than these will teach them. This, were it proper, might be abundantly confirmed: but I only appeal to experience, as above all exception. In the next place, it cannot be but the Jews' must be most intolerably scandalized at the use and worship of images, and will be the more averse to all thoughts of ever embracing of Christianity, inasmuch as the worship of a statue or image, is a dreadful, heinous, and enormous crime with them. They most firmly believe, that he can never be the Messias, whose disciples allow as lawful what is so directly contrary to the divine law. And this is to be reckoned so much the greater evil, because it is almost the principal occasion of all the Jews' indignation against Christ and Christians; so that their conversion to our religion, is in my opinion to be despaired of, unless this stumbling-block be first taken out of the way. Thirdly, Offence will hereby be inevitably given to an infinite number of Christians, and they will be irreconcilably alienated from your church, whilst having their minds possessed with a true sense of the divine prohibition, they think they have just reason to look upon image-worship as no better than idolatry: when also at the same time, those that contend for it do not believe it necessary by reason of any divine command, yet nevertheless press it as much as in them lies upon men's consciences, as though it were necessary. Who sees not what great evils and inconveniences these are?

City of God, b. viii. chap. xxvii. "Many Christians venerate the saints of both sexes, as they do God. And I do not see, in many respects, wherein the difference consists, in the opinion which Christians maintain respecting the saints, and the heathens held respecting their gods."

¹ On this subject, see the learned Conferences of Limborch (grand nephew to Episcopius) with Orobio, a Jew, p. 230, &c. in Latin, at Gouda, in 1687.

The ignorant people are tempted to continue in their profane sottishness; the Jews in their destructive error; Christians in their deplorable schism; and all good men in an endless despair of ever seeing an amendment. So that I need not fear to make thyself the judge between us; and beg thee to tell me seriously, whether the single advantage of using and worshipping images will equal, not to say preponderate, these so many and so great mischiefs."

The next article is concerning papal indulgences, in these words: "I also affirm, that the power of granting indulgences was left by Christ to the Church, and the use of them tends very much to the salvation of Christians." Now the doctrine of indulgences, as it was before the Council of Trent, and hath been since taught in the Church of Rome, is big with gross errors. It depends on the fiction of Purgatory; it supposeth a superfluity of the satisfactions of the saints; which being jumbled together (I relate it with horror) with the merits and satisfaction of our Saviour, make up one treasury of the Church; that the Bishop of Rome keeps the Key of it, as having the sole power of granting indulgences, either by himself immediately, or by others commissioned from him: lastly, it very absurdly extends the effect of the power of the keys, left by Christ in his Church, to men in the other world. Is not this now a doctrine worthy of a place in our creed, and to be made an article of the Catholic faith? That the doctrine and use of indulgences were never heard of in the Church of Christ for many hundreds of years, is certain, and confessed too by divers learned men of the Roman communion. I shall cite only one of them, but he such a one as may be one instance for all, (*instar omnium.*) Our Fisher, bishop of Rochester^a, Luther's great an-

^a See Burton, p. 283, note (a), for the original. Appendix, as before, Art. 10.

^b Art. xii. cont. Lutherum. [Assertionis Lutherane Confutatio per Rev. Pat. J. Roffensem, Episc.] Rivet, in his Catholicus Or-

tagonist, and Rome's martyr, gives us this account of Indulgences: "Many perhaps are tempted not to rely much upon indulgences, upon this consideration, that the use of them appears to be new, and very lately known amongst Christians. To whom I answer, it is not very certain who was the first author of them. The doctrine of Purgatory was rarely, if at all, heard of amongst the ancients. And to this very day the Greeks believe it not. Nor was the belief either of purgatory or indulgences so necessary in the primitive church as it is now. So long as men were unconcerned about purgatory, nobody inquired after indulgences: for upon that depends all the worth of indulgences. Take away purgatory, and there is no more need of these. Seeing therefore purgatory was so lately known and received in the universal church, who will wonder that in the first ages of Christianity indulgences were not made use of?"

In this indeed the bishop seems to be mistaken, that he thought the doctrine of purgatory and the use of indulgences to be coeval, and that the latter immediately and necessarily follows from the former. It is true, purgatory and papal indulgences are both of them later inventions. But I think, when men were first seduced to a belief of purgatory, they were not yet presently so foolish, as to think that any one mortal man had power by his pardons to deliver men out of it. Antichristianism in the Roman Church did not presently come to that maturity, nor was the papal power so soon advanced to that prodigious height and greatness. It was at first more reasonably judged, that the supposed miserable souls in purga-

thodoxus, tract iii. quæst. xiii. near the end, has given the original passage from Fisher. Dr. Burton gives the original, in p. 284, and refers to art. xviii. contra Lutherum, Oper. p. 496, edit. 1597. This learned Romanist rose successively through various offices in the church, by the favour of Margaret, the mother of Henry VII. and other potent personages, till he became a Roman Cardinal, which, together with other matters, cost him his life, under the tyrannical and inexorable Henry VIII. at the age of 76, in 1535.

tory, were to receive their relief, rather from the prayers of the church together with the prayers, almsdeeds, and good works of their living friends and relations.

To sum up this matter in short: papal indulgences, as taught and used in the Church of Rome, (to which this article of the Trent Creed must have reference; or else let any man tell me, what the meaning of it is,) if they were freely granted, can by no means be justified and defended, but the merchandize and sale of them for money is abominable. That such a vile trade of indulgences hath been driven in the Church of Rome, cannot without the greatest impudence be denied, as long as the Tax Book of the Apostolic Chancery¹ (or rather, Penitentiary) is extant; of which filthy book Espenceæus, a learned doctor of the Roman Communion, thus sadly and most justly complains in Epist. ad Tit. c. i. "There is exposed to sale, and easily to be had by any who will be at the charge of purchasing it, a book openly and publicly printed here, and which may be had now as well as formerly, entitled, the Tax of the Apostolical Chamber or chancery, whereby may be learned more sorts of wickedness, than from all the summists and the summaries of all vices, and a licence for most of them, but an absolution for all, is offered to such as will bid well for it. I spare names, for as one, though at present I cannot well recollect who, says, the very repeating of them is offensive. It is wonderful that during this time and this schism, such an infamous kind of index of so many, such foul and horrid wickednesses, that I cannot imagine any more scandalous work is to be met with in Germany,

¹ *Taxa Cancel. Apost.* Paris. apud Tass. Denis. 1520. Consult *Taxatio Papalis*; being an account of the tax books of the united church, and court of modern Rome; by Emancipatus. Rivington, London, 1825. In p. 50 of this Tract, the original passage from Espenceæus will be found, and see also Burton, as before, p. 285, 286, for the original passage here quoted. Claudius Espenceæus was a Frenchman, and illustrious by descent; he died at Paris, in 1569, aged 60.

or Switzerland, or any of those countries that have withdrawn their obedience to the papal see, should not have been suppressed. So far have the factors from the Roman communion been from suppressing it, that many new impunities for such so gross enormities are granted, and the rest confirmed, in the faculties of the legates dispatched to their several countries." A little after he adds out of Mantuan¹, "It is sad to see how money carries all things at Rome." And not very long before the Council of Trent, what a prodigious mass of money Pope Leo² raised by these indulgences, the noble historian Thuanus³ tells us: "Leo," saith he, "to the guilt of his dispensations, added another and greater, when at the instigation of the Cardinal Lawrence Puccius, he every where exacted monies in vast sums, sending his bulls through all the kingdoms of Christendom, promising forgiveness of all their sins, and eternal life, at a price stated, according to the quality of their crimes."

In a word, all sober men cried shame at this abominable cheat imposed on the souls of men for whom Christ died; and if the men that influenced and governed the Trent Convention⁴ had had any true

¹ Baptist Mantuan, once general of the Carmelite Monks, a native of Italy, excelled in versification; he died in 1516, aged 69. Dr. Burton, p. 286, note (e) gives the original, and refers to Eccl. v. 123.

² Leo, the tenth Bishop of Rome, of the illustrious house of Medici, in Florence; his sale of indulgences gave one occasion, at least, to the reformation by Luther. He lived, what is called, a life of pleasure; and died in 1521, aged 44 years, after having been principal bishop of the Roman or Latin church, eight years and upwards.

³ Ad Ann. 1515. In the history of his own time, in Latin. James Augustus Thuanus, or de Thou, a statesman, and historian of France, as the latter, the history of his own time, evinces. He died in 1617, aged 63 years. See the original passage here quoted, from Thuanus, in Burton's note (*), p. 287.

⁴ For the history of this pretended General Council of Trent, see the Rev. Joseph Mendham's *Memoirs of the Council of Trent*, principally derived from manuscript and unpublished records; London, 1834. For the subject of indulgences, see page 316, &c. of the same work. Besides *Taxatio Papalis*, as above, see also Mendham's *Life of Pius IV.*, in the Appendix, particularly, page 278. *Le Chais*'

sense of religion, they would have denounced an anathema against this vile doctrine and practice, and not (as they have done) decreed, and that as an article of faith, without any restriction or qualification, "That the use of indulgences is highly conducing to the salvation of Christians¹." But they were the Pope's vassals, and received their instructions from Rome not to reform any thing, though never so much amiss, that tended to the grandeur and gain of that see.

The last article I shall take notice of is contained in these words: "I acknowledge the holy Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church to be the mother and mistress of all churches, and promise true obedience to the Pope of Rome, successor to St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, and the vicar of Jesus Christ²." Here the ecclesiastic swears to three great untruths, one upon the neck of another: 1. That the Roman Church is the mother of all other churches, which is a manifest falsehood in matter of fact, for every body knows that the Church of Jerusalem was the first mother church, and is so called and acknowledged by the ancient fathers. St. Jerome³ saith, "It was the church founded at Jerusalem that planted all the other churches." And the Synodical Letters from the Council of Constantinople to Damascus, and the western bishops, call Cyril Bishop of Jerusalem, which is the mother of all churches⁴. From this truly mother church divers other churches were planted in the east, before the Gospel came to Rome, as particularly the Church of Antioch, where the Letters on the Jubilee and Indulgences, in French, at the Hague, in 1751, should also be mentioned; and also various portions of Stillingfleet's Treatises on the Idolatry of the Church of Rome, in his works, vol. v.

¹ See Burton, as before, note (g) for the original Latin.

² Id. *ibid.* Appendix to this Tract, as before, p. 94, Art. 11.

³ Dr. Burton, note (h) gives the words, and refers to Comm. in Isaiam. lib. ii. p. 33.

⁴ Theodoret, Hist. lib. v. c. ix. See the words in Burton, p. 228, note.

⁵ Acts xi. 26.

disciples were first called Christians. Upon the persecution raised against the Church of Jerusalem, the Christians of that church being dispersed and scattered abroad, soon spread the Gospel far and near through the east. And to come nearer home, it is affirmed by some learned men of the Roman Church, that our Britain received the Gospel before Rome¹; for Suarez² confesseth that the Gospel was preached here from the first rising of it. And Baronius³, from some manuscripts in the Vatican, affixeth our conversion to Christianity to the thirty-fifth year of our Lord, which was near nine years before the founding of the Roman Church. But if the credit of these manuscripts be questionable⁴, this however is evident, that our Britain did not receive her first Christianity from Rome, but from the East. This I say is evident from the customs observed here from the beginning in the observation of Easter, and the administration of Baptism⁵, different from the Roman use, but

¹ The present learned Bishop of Salisbury, Dr. Burgess, in his *Tracts on the ancient British Church*, London, 1815, pp. 24, 72; &c. has shown the very early introduction of Christianity into Britain.

² *Defens. Fid. Cath.* lib. i. art. i. Francis Suarez, a learned Spaniard and Jesuit, as Alegambe shows, published the work here referred to in 1614. He died in 1617, aged 69 years. Consult M. A. De Dominis, in vol. ii. of his *De Republica Ecclesiastica*, pp. 879, 895, in reply to this work of Suarez generally.

³ Caesar Baronius, the great Roman Annalist and Cardinal, a man of vast application in his studies. His *Annals* derive much of their best matter from the Lutheran Centuriators, who had previously published a like work. Those particulars on which he insists, favouring the Roman Church, have been noticed and replied to by Casaubon, Bhanage, and others. Baronius died in 1607, in his 69th year.

⁴ Bishop Stillingfleet, in his *Antiquities of the British Churches*, chap. i. (in his works, vol. iii. p. 2,) proves that Christianity could not have been preached in Britain so early as the year 35. His opinion, like that of the present Bishop of Salisbury, was, that St. Paul introduced Christianity into Britain, after his first coming to and departure from Rome. The place of Baronius referred to is in his *Annals*, tom. i. ann. 35, n. 5.

⁵ On the subjects of Easter and Baptism, see Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, book ii. chap. ii.; and with respect to Easter, the Appendix, note 9, p. 694, &c. in Dr. Smith's edition, at Cambridge, 1722. The English reader will on this subject find himself amply repaid by perusing Stillingfleet's *Answer to Cressy*, in his works, vol. v. p. 685, &c.

conform to the Oriental Churches. So that we may justly check the arrogance of the present Roman Church in the words of Saint Paul to the proud Corinthians, setting up among themselves certain customs contrary to the institutes of all other churches. "Came the word of God out from you? or came it to you only?" As though it were said, are you the first and only Christians? your church the first and only Church of Christ? Yes, say the Romanists, our church is the mother of all other churches. But this is apparently false, for "the law" first came "out of Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The Church of Rome pretends also to be the only Church of Christ, that is, that there is no true Church of Christ, but what is in union with and subjection to her. But this is as false a claim as the other; for there were divers true churches of Christ before the Church of Rome was in being, which therefore could have no dependence upon her.

2. That the Church of Rome is the mistress of all other churches¹, is another great untruth—a proposition which, if it should be advanced in the first ages of the Church, would have startled all Christendom. Every metropolitical church would presently have stood up, and loudly pleaded her own immunities, rights, and privileges, independent upon Rome or any other metropolis. These rights and privileges were confirmed as of primitive and ancient custom by the sixth canon of the great Council of Nice, as hath been before shown; established also by the eighth canon of the Œcumenical Council of Ephesus, as by and by will appear. Indeed, in the days of old, when the Church of Rome was quite another thing from what now it is, all other churches, upon

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 36.

² Compare Isaiah ii. 3, Micah iv. 2, with Luke xxiv. 47.

³ Consult Dr. Barrow's excellent *Treatise on the Supremacy*, and the two following, to whom Barrow is much indebted; Whitaker's *De Romano Pontifice*, and several chapters in the first part of Cyprian Thorpe's work, already quoted.

several accounts, paid a singular respect to her, and gave her the pre-eminence, but they never acknowledged her mistress-ship over them, or themselves to be her serving maids. This language would then have sounded very harsh, and been esteemed insolent and arrogant by all the Churches of Christ. In later days, indeed, she hath made herself mistress, but a mistress of misrule, disturbing the peace, invading the rights, and imposing upon the faith of other churches.

3. That the Bishop of Rome is the vicar of Christ, that is, under Christ the head and Governor of the universal Church, is another gross untruth. The universal pastorship and jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome over all other bishops, was never heard of, never pretended to, by any bishop of that church for the first six hundred years and more, as I have before shown; to which, all that I shall now add concerns our British Church. We say then, our Church of Britain was never under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome for the first six hundred years, Britain being a distinct diocese of the empire¹, and, consequently, having a primate of her own, independent upon any other primate or metropolitan. This appears, first, from the customs of our church during that time, in the observation of Easter and the administration of baptism, different from, as was before observed, the Roman custom, but agreeing with the Asiatic churches; for it is altogether incredible that the whole British Church should so unanimously have dissented from Rome for so many hundred years together, if she had been subject to the jurisdiction of the Roman Bishop, or that the Roman Bishop all that time should suffer it, if he had had a patriarchal power over her.

¹ Bishop Stillingfleet, in his grounds of the Protestant Religion, (Works, vol. iv. p. 378, &c.) has set down the civil dioceses of the Roman empire, of which Britain formed one, and shown the conformity of the ecclesiastical with the civil state. Bingham, *ibid.* book ix. chap. i.; Crakanthorpe, *ibid.* p. 144, &c. particularly deserves attention.

2. The same is evident by the unanimous testimony of our historians, who tell us that when Austin the Monk¹ came into Britain, as St. Gregory's legate, which was after the sixth century was fully complete and ended, and required submission from our church to the Bishop of Rome, as her patriarch, the proposal was rejected, as of a new and strange thing never heard of before. The answer of Dinothus², the learned Abbot of Bangor, in the name of all the Britons, is famous, viz. "That they knew no obedience due to him whom they call the Pope, but the obedience of love, and that under God they were governed by the Bishop of Caerleon." Under God, that is, immediately, without any foreign prelate or patriarch intervening, they were to be governed by the Bishop of Caerleon, as their only primate and patriarch; which privilege continued to the succeeding bishops of that see for several ages, saving that the archiepiscopal chair was afterwards removed from Caerleon to St. David's. And that this was indeed the sense not only of Dinothus, but of all the whole body of our British clergy at that time, all our historians tell us, witnessing the absolute and unanimous resolution of the British Clergy, both bishops and priests, synodically met together, not to subject themselves to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome³.

This being the ancient privilege of the British Church, we have an undoubted right of exemption

¹ This Austin is not to be confounded with St. Austin or Augustine: the latter flourished in a former age of the church, about the year 396.

² We have no certain intelligence of Dinothus, excepting from Bede, and others who have followed him, as to this interview. Bishop Tanner, who has copied Leland, informs us that possibly he fell by the swords of the Saxons, as did the greater part of the monks of Bangor. See p. 71 of this tract.

³ Vide Spelmanni *Concilia Orbis Britannici*, tom. i. p. 108; Gualt. Mon. (Galfrid. Monumetensis) lib. ii. chap. xii.; Bedæ *Historia Ecclesiast.* *ibid.*; but especially Stillingfleet's *Antiquities of the British Churches*, in his works, vol. iii. p. 221, where the answer of Dinoth to Austin is particularly considered and vindicated from Romish objections.

from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome, by the ancient canons of the Catholic Church : particularly by the sixth canon of the great Nicene Council above-mentioned, by which it was decreed, That the ancient customs should every where obtain, and that the then privileges of every province should be preserved inviolate. But this is most evident from the eighth canon of the Council of Ephesus¹, occasioned by the famous case of the Cyprian bishops, which was this : the metropolitan of Cyprus being dead, (Troilus, the Bishop of Constance,) the Bishop of Antioch pretended that it belonged to him to ordain their metropolitan, because Cyprus was within the civil jurisdiction of the diocese of Antioch. Upon this, the Cyprian bishops made their complaint to the General Council at Ephesus, grounding it upon the Nicene canon, and pleading that their metropolitan had been of ancient time exempt from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Antioch, and was ordained by a synod of Cyprian bishops : which privilege was not only confirmed to them by the Ephesian Council, but a general decree passed, That the rights of every province should be preserved whole and inviolate, which it had of old, according to the ancient custom. And it is to be observed, that the Bishop of Antioch had a more colourable pretence to a jurisdiction over the Cyprian bishops, than Gregory could have to a jurisdiction over our British churches : for Cyprus was indeed within the civil jurisdiction of Antioch, but our Britain was originally itself a distinct diocese of the empire. Yet the Ephesian fathers judged, that ancient custom should prevail in the case of the Cyprian bishops ; how much more then should it in ours² ? Certainly Pope Gregory, when, by his legate

¹ As to this Council of Ephesus, see note, p. 13, n. 2. of this tract. Also Carel's Dissertation concerning the Government of the Ancient Church, p. 164. &c.

² See the Pandectæ Canonum, vol. i. p. 104, where Balsamon's Commentary in favour of the independence of the churches of Cyprus

Austin, he challenged to himself a jurisdiction over our British Church, was ignorant of, or had forgotten, or else regarded not the canons of the Nicene and Ephesian Councils. If it be objected, that our British Church afterwards submitted herself to the Bishop of Rome as her patriarch, which power he enjoyed for many ages, and that therefore our first reformers cannot be excused from schism, in casting off that power which by so long a prescription he was possessed of; we answer, we did indeed yield ourselves to the Roman usurpation¹, but it was because we could not help it; we were at first forced, awed, and affrighted into this submission. For, who hath not heard of the barbarous massacre of the poor innocent monks of Bangor, to the number of twelve hundred, for refusing Austin's proposal, and asserting the ancient rights and privileges of the Britannie churches²? When this force ceased, and we were left to our liberty and freedom of resuming our pri-

is worthy of notice, he being patriarch of Antioch; and also Bishop Beveridge's Annotations, in vol. ii. p. 106, compared with p. 58. Stillingfleet, *ibid.* vol. iii. p. 66, &c.

¹ The jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome was first established in this country in the twelfth century, and continued (but not without frequent opposition and restriction, by the king and parliament, from the thirty-fifth year of King Edward I. to the twenty-fifth of Henry VIII.) till the beginning of the sixteenth century; that is, for about four hundred years before the Reformation. See *The Three Gate-chains* by Dr. Burgess, the present Bishop of Salisbury, p. 229. London, 1823. Stillingfleet's works, vol. iii. pp. 66, 221, &c. as to the British churches; vol. iv. p. 396, &c. as to the Anglo-Saxon churches; as to the Church of England, p. 774, &c.; as to the reformation thereof, vol. iv. p. 364, &c.

² Dr. Burton, p. 293, has a note as follows: "The massacre at Bangor had no connection with Austin's mission." See Turner's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. i. p. 319, &c. This massacre is acknowledged by Bede, the historian of the Anglo-Saxon Church, and one of its chief ornaments in the third century, in book ii. chap. ii. who, we must remember, is not favourably disposed towards the ancient British churches. Bede says, that fifty out of the twelve hundred escaped. On this massacre, see *Observations on Dr. Arnold's (Master of Rugby School) Christian Duty of granting the Roman Catholic Claims*: by Tho. P. Pantin, pp. 85, 89, &c. Lutterworth, 1829.

primitive rights, why might we not do it, as we saw occasion, without the imputation of schism? This is not only our just plea, but it is ingenuously confessed by Father Barnes, our learned countryman, and of the 'Roman communion'. His words are these: "The island of Britain anciently enjoyed the same privilege with that of Cyprus, that is to say, of being in subjection to the laws of no patriarch: which privilege, though heretofore abolished by tumults and force of war, yet being recovered by consent of the whole kingdom, in Henry the Eighth's reign, seems for peace-sake most proper to be retained, so it be done without breach of Catholic unity, or incurring the charge of schism." Indeed, we had very great reason to resume our primitive right and privilege of exemption from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome, when, by means thereof, he lorded it over our faith, and imposed manifest and gross corruptions both in doctrine and worship upon our consciences. But this by the way. We return to the article of the Trent Creed now before us.

Concerning which, it is farther to be observed, that it founds the universal pastorship of the Bishop of Rome upon a divine right. It says, the Bishop of Rome is the vicar of Jesus Christ; that is, under Christ the head and governor of the universal church. By what right? He is St. Peter's successor. What then? Why St. Peter was constituted by Christ the prince of the Apostles, that is (if there be any connexion of parts in the article), he had by Christ committed to him authority and jurisdiction

¹ See original in Dr. Burton's note, p. 294. Cath. Rom. Pacif. § 3. Barnes's *Catholicus Romanus Pacificus* is to be found in Brown's edition of the *Fasciculus Rerum*, vol. ii. § 3, commences at p. 838. Stillingfleet refers to Barnes in vol. iv. p. 382. Barnes was a Benedictine monk; on account of his writings he was seized at Paris in 1656, and hurried, with studied barbarity, to Flanders, and thence to Rome, where from the prison of the Inquisition, he was removed to a prison for lunatics, and died. Brown, as above, p. 826.

* *Quo jure?*

over the rest of the apostles; and consequently over the whole church.

But the falsehood and folly of this pretence hath been manifestly exposed by very many writers¹ of our church; particularly, that great man Dr. Bramhall, Primate of Ireland, hath sufficiently refuted it in these few words², "Let us consider," saith he, "First, That all the twelve apostles were equal in mission, equal in commission, equal in power, equal in honour, equal in all things, except priority of order, without which no society can well subsist."

"So much Bellarmine" confesseth, that by these words, 'As my Father sent me, so send I you,' our Saviour endowed them with all the fulness of power, that mortal men were capable of. And therefore no single apostle had jurisdiction over the rest; equals have no power over each other; but the whole college of apostles, to which the supreme managery of ecclesiastical affairs did belong in common: whether a new apostle was to be ordained, or the office of deaconship was to be erected; or fit persons were to

¹ *Davenantii Determinationes*, quest. xlvii. p. 219, &c. Cantab. 1634, of which the title translated is, "Neither Peter, nor the Bishop of Rome was appointed monarch over the whole church." Dr. John Davenant was successively Fellow and President of Queen's College, Cambridge; and also Margaret Professor of Divinity in that university. In 1621 he became Bishop of Salisbury, and died in 1641, aged 70 years. For his merit, in his younger days, he was much befriended by Dr. Whitaker; he is now principally known for his *Exposition of the Epistles to the Colossians*. See note, p. 19 of this tract.

² Bramhall's works in his *Just Vindication of the Church of England*, disc. ii. 5. Dr. John Bramhall rose through various gradations in the Church to be Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland. He much distinguished himself against Papists and Dissenters, as his works printed in 1667, at Dublin, evince. His death took place in 1663, aged 70 years.

³ *De Pontifice Romano*, lib. iv. cap. xxiii. See *Primum testantur verba*. See also Burton's notes (q, r), p. 295. Particular Replies to Bellarmine, on this place, will be found in Whitaker's *De Romano Pontifice*, contained in the second vol. of his works, pp. 529. col. 2; 533, col. 2; 560; 567, col. 2; 717, col. 2, &c. Crakanthorpe, *ibid.* pp. 114, 117. Barrow on the Supremacy, p. 51, &c. London, 1680.

be delegated for the ordering of the church, as Peter and John, Judas and Silas¹; or informations of great moment were to be heard, as against Peter himself? (though Peter out of modesty might condescend, and submit to that to which he was not obliged in duty, yet it had not become the other apostles to sit as judges upon their superior, placed over them by Christ); or whether the weightier questions, of the calling of the Gentiles, and circumcision, and the law of Moses, were to be determined, still we find the supremacy in the college.

“Secondly, That drowsy dream, that the plenitude of ecclesiastical power and jurisdiction was given by Christ to St. Peter, as to an ordinary pastor, to be derived from him to his successors, but to the rest of the apostles, as delegates for term of life, to die with themselves, as it is lately and boldly asserted without reason, without authority either divine or human; so it is most repugnant to the doctrine of the fathers, who make all bishops to be the vicars and ambassadors of Christ (not of the pope), and successors of the apostles, indifferently by vicarious ordination², who make but one episcopacy in the world, whereof every bishop hath his share. St. Peter was a pastor, and the pastoral office is of perpetual necessity in the church. True; but so were all the rest of the apostles pastors as well as he. And if we examine the matter more narrowly, for whose³ advantage this distinction was devised, it was not for St. Peter’s own advantage, who, setting aside his principality of order, is confessed to have had but an equal share of power with his fellow apostles, but for the pope’s advantage, and the Roman court’s, whom they desire to invest solely with the key of all original jurisdiction.

“And if we trace on this argument a little farther, to search out how the Bishop of Rome comes to be

¹ Acts i. vi. viii. xv. xi.

² Vicaria ordinatione.

³ Cui bono?

St. Peter's heir altogether¹, to the exclusion of his elder brother the Bishop of Antioch, they produce no authority that I have seen, but a blind, ill-grounded legend, out of a counterfeit Hegesippus, of St. Peter's being about to leave Rome, and Christ's meeting him upon the way, and admonishing him to return to Rome, where he must be crucified for his name; which reason halts on both sides; the foundation is apocryphal, and the superstructure is weak and unjointed, without any necessary connexion²."

We have now, I think, sufficiently made good our second charge against the Church of Rome, viz. That she hath changed the primitive canon and rule of faith by adding many new articles to it; and those so far from being necessary articles of faith, that they are not truths, but manifestly erroneous propositions, repugnant to reason, Scripture, and the sense of the primitive Catholic Church: and yet all the clergy of the Roman communion are now forced not only to subscribe, but in the most solemn manner to swear to them. O miserably enslaved clergy!

There was a time when the Gallican Church understood her own liberty, and boldly asserted it, refusing to own the authority of the Trent Convention, as being altogether influenced and governed by the court of Rome. It was a brave protestation of the ambassador of France, made in the face of the Council of Trent, in the name of the king his master, and the French clergy, in these words: "We" refuse to be subject to the command and disposition of Pius the Fourth; we reject, refuse, and condemn, all the

¹ *Ex asse.*

² Whitaker, *ibid.* p. 590, col. ii. &c. Also (Cave's) *Inquiry whether St. Peter was ever at Rome, and bishop of that church?* published in 1687 on this topic, pp. 32, &c. 56. Concerning Hegesippus, his writings, and the forgeries in his name, see Du Pin, as before, vol. i. pp. 68, 64. He is set down by Cave, in his *Historia Literaria*, tom. i. p. 73, in the year 170.

³ Goldast, tom. iii. p. 571. M. H. Goldast was a native of Switzerland; the various works which he published particularly illustrate the history of Germany. He died in 1635, aged 59.

judgments, censures, and decrees of the said Pius. And although (most holy fathers) your religion, life, and learning, was ever, and ever shall be of great esteem with us; yet seeing indeed you do nothing, but all things are done at Rome rather than at Trent, and the things that are here published are rather the decrees of Pius the Fourth than of the Council of Trent, we denounce and protest here before you all, that whatsoever things are decreed and published in this assembly, by the mere will and pleasure of Pius, neither the most Christian King will ever approve, nor the French clergy ever acknowledge to be the decrees of a General Council."

I wish the Gallican Church had still persisted in this resolution. Yes (saith a great man of our church), so she did, and doth to this day; for though she doth not oppose the Council of Trent, but acquiesce, to avoid such disadvantages as must ensue thereupon, yet she never did admit it¹. I should be heartily glad if this were true; but if all the Clergy of France, which represent the French Church, do, as well as the Clergy of the other Roman Catholic dominions, subscribe and swear to the Trent Creed, as I suppose they do, and if they did not, I cannot see how they could be accounted within the communion of the Roman Church; then they admit of the Council of Trent with a witness, in its full extent and latitude, as to all its canons, decrees, and definitions, not only which concern certain points of doctrine (as is pretended), but all other which relate to the discipline and government of the church. For this is the last article of the Trent Creed: "Moreover, what things soever else are delivered, defined, and declared, by the sacred canons and Œcumenical Councils, and especially by the holy Council of Trent, I undoubtedly receive and profess²."

¹ Bramhall, tom. i. p. 128.

² See Burton's note, p. 299, for the original, and the Appendix as before, p. 94. Art. 12.

SECTION IV.

3. The third and last thing we charge the Church of Rome with is, that she hath lamentably corrupted the primitive liturgy and form of divine worship. This was a necessary consequent of the former; so corrupt a Faith could not but produce as corrupt a Worship. To enumerate and represent in their proper colours, all the corruptions of the worship of God in the Roman Church, would fill a large volume, I shall therefore only briefly point at some of them. The Prayers of that church are in a tongue generally not understood by the people, contrary to reason, which of itself dictates, that when we pray to God we ought to understand our own prayers; contrary to the plain declaration of Scripture¹, contrary to the practice of the Catholic Church in the first ages, when Christians everywhere prayed to God in the language of their respective countries, as Origen expressly tells us in his Eighth Book against Celsus, p. 402. Justin Martyr also, who lived very near the apostolic age, informs us, that in the Christian assemblies of his time, there were common prayers², that is, prayers wherein all that were present joined in common, and bore a part; and that, as we learn from other very ancient authors³, by making their responses aloud in due place, and by saying the other prayer after the priest or deacon in a low voice⁴.

¹ 1 Cor. xiv.

² *Κοινὰ Εἴηαι*.

³ Cyprian, *Serm. de Oratione*. These several passages of Origen, Justin Martyr, and Cyprian (together with many more), will be found in Whitby's *Treatise in Confutation of the Latin Service*, pp. 13, 10, 11, 14. London, 1687. Usserii *Historia Dogmatica*, pp. 17, 10, 60, &c. This worthy saint and martyr (Cyprian) of the primitive church, was converted from heathen idolatry about the year 246. His writings, which were translated into English above a century since, testify his zeal in his Master's service, for whose sake he suffered, by decapitation, A. D. 258, being the first Bishop of Carthage, in Africa, which underwent martyrdom. Cave, tom. i.

⁴ *Submissa voce*.

Now there are no such Common Prayers in the Church of Rome; the priests say and do all, the people being left to gaze about, or to whisper one to another, or to look upon their private manuals of devotion, according as their inclination leads them.

Again: whereas in the first and best ages, the Churches of Christ directed all their prayers according to the Scripture, to God only, through the alone medium of Jesus Christ, the Liturgy of the present Church of Rome is interspersed with supplications and prayers to angels and saints, the unwarrantableness whereof I have above sufficiently shown. To what is there said, I shall only add these two considerations.

First: supposing (not granting) the learned men of the Roman Church could, by their subtle distinctions, so refine the practice of the invocation of angels and saints as to make it innocent to themselves, yet experience tells us that the common people, who understand not those distinctions, are prone to transgress and run into sin, and a grievous sin too, in their practice of it, namely, to be taken off in a great degree from that trust and alliance, that entire dependence on Christ, that love and gratitude toward him which they ought to have, and indeed to be more fond of the saints than of their Saviour. It is visible to all men with what zeal the silly, deluded souls run to the shrines of the saints, how even prodigal they are in their offerings to them, when in the mean time their devotion toward their Saviour is very cold, and their oblations to him sparing and niggardly. This is so manifest, that it hath been confessed by learned men of the Roman communion¹. It is acknowledged

¹ The several following authorities of Biel—Halensis (Alexander of Hailes), Antoninus or Antonius (Archbishop of Naples), Lombard, the Office of the Blessed Virgin, Berchorius, and Bernardinus, are, with a single exception, copied and translated from Bishop Davenant's 44th Determination, p. 203. &c. They may also be found in Dr. Burton's edition of Bull, vol. ii. p. 301. &c.

by Biel¹, in the Canon of the Mass², lect. xxx., and in the Exposition of the Canticle of Mary, "most of us are more affected towards some saint than towards our Lord himself." By our Alexander³ of Hailes, "Sometimes sinners are more inclinable to supplicate the saints than the Judge." Cassander also confesseth, that there are men in the Church of Rome, otherwise no ill men, who trust in their patron saints more than in Christ their Redeemer. His words are these⁴: "There are some, and those no bad men neither, who have made choice of certain saints for their patrons and guardians, and put more trust in their merits and intercession than in the merits of Christ."

Secondly: whereas it is pretended by some Romanists, especially of late, that their prayers to saints amount to no more than a praying or desiring⁵ them to pray for us, as we desire the prayers of one another here on earth, this is manifestly false; for besides what hath been before observed, that they pray to saints deceased, and in a state and place vastly distant from them, wherein they cannot possibly hear their prayers, unless by revelation, or in the glass of the Trinity⁶, which are groundless imaginations; I say besides this, divers of their greatest

¹ Gabriel Biel, professor of Divinity at Tübingen and Wittenberg, in Germany, flourished about the year 1480: the time of his death is somewhat uncertain. Among his works, that on the Canon of the Mass is generally reckoned; it is, however, transcribed from Eggeline, of Brunswick. Cave, tom. ii. app. p. 193, &c.

² In Can. Miss. lect. xxx. in Expos. Cant. Mariæ. Burton, as before, p. 301 note (z) for Biel's words.

³ In his Latin Commentary on Lombard's Book of the Sentences, part iv. quest. xxvi. memb. 3. Alexander derived his surname of Hailes from the place of his birth, in Gloucestershire; he flourished in the year 1230, and died at Paris in 1245. Cave doubts (as before, p. 293) whether the above portion of the Commentary is his. Burton, as before, note (a) for the original words of Hailes.

⁴ This passage is taken from Cassander's Consultation, under De Meritis Intercessionis Sanctorum, and the sentence beginning "Alter error est." For the original, see Burton, as before, note (b).

⁵ Ora pro nobis.

⁶ Specule Trinitatis.

doctors ingenuously confess, yea, and boldly profess, that they pray to the saints, as they are appointed by God to be conduit pipes between him and us, conduit pipes¹, or instruments of conveying His grace to us. So our Alexander of Hailes²: "Seeing the divine grace descends upon us by means of the saints, it is but fit that our ascent to God be through their mediation." So their learned Archbishop of Florence³: "It is the law of the Deity to raise the things below to those that are above by those in the middle; but as to the gifts of grace, the saints stand in the middle betwixt God and such as are travelling towards him. Hence the divine benefits descend upon us by the mediation of angels and holy souls." They say also, that the saints do procure for us and convey to us God's blessings by the merit of their intercession, and that this is the ground of their praying to them. So again, Alexander of Hailes⁴, as above: "The saints are invoked by us by reason of our want of merit, that where our deserts fail, those of others may help us out." So the great master of the sentences, Peter Lombard⁵: "We pray them to intercede for us, that is, that their merits may succour us."

And indeed most of their prayers to the saints are so expressed, that they cannot without violence be interpreted to any other sense.

¹ Canales gratiæ.

² Part iv. quæst. xxvi. art. v. Burton for the original, as before, page 302 (e).

³ Antoninus, or rather Antonius, of Florence, was Archbishop of Naples, to which dignity he rose after passing through various employments in church and state. Although a saint of the Roman Church, his works are replete with more than "old wives' fables." He died in 1459, in his 70th year. The work here referred to is his Theological Summ. part. iii. title iii. Burton, as before, note (d).

⁴ Alexander of Hailes, as above. Halensis, part iv. quæst. xxvi. art. v. See Burton's note (e) as before, p. 303.

⁵ Sententiarum, lib. iv. dis. xlv. This work is a compilation from the writings of the Fathers, digested in a scholastic manner, upon a similar plan to those of Abelard and Bandinus, who preceded Lombard. This is his principal work. He died in 1164, after having been Bishop of Paris five years. Cave, p. 220, &c. Burton as above, p. 303, note (e).

But most extravagant is the invocation and worship of the blessed Virgin used and practised in the Church of Rome. I will not urge here the hymn in Cassander's time sung in their churches¹: "Beseech thy mother, command thy Son, O happy parent, who makest expiation for our wickedness, by thy authority as a mother, command the Redeemer." Nor the Psalter of our Lady, mentioned also by Cassander, as that which was in use in his time, in which through the whole book of Psalms, wheresoever the name of the Lord occurred, it was changed into the name of our Lady²; though I know not whether those horrid blasphemies were ever censured and condemned by any public act of the Roman Church.

But I do affirm, that there are still such addresses and forms of prayer to the blessed Virgin either enjoined or allowed by authority to be used in the Church of Rome, as no man who hath a due concern for the honour of his Redeemer, can read or hear without abhorrence and detestation. Such is that in the office of blessed Mary, where they thus speak to her³: "Hail, queen, the mother of mercy, our life, delight, and hope, hail! we shelter ourselves under thy protection, despise not our supplications in the times of our necessity, but deliver us from all dangers, thou ever glorious Virgin." This is surely more than "Pray for us;" for they pray unto her as their life and hope, and fly to her as their refuge and protection, beseeching her to deliver them always from all dangers. But chiefly it is to be remarked that she is here called the queen and mother of mercy. Would

¹ Cassandri Consult. art. xxi. de Cultu Sanctorum, or rather De Meritis et Intercessione, and the words beginning "ora matrem et." See Burton, as before, p. 303, note (h).

² Cassander, *ibid.* Quid quod totum Psalterium. See the Psalter thus spoken of in Chemnitz's *Examen Concilii Tridentini*, part. iii. p. 114, &c. Geneva; 1610, in Latin; and in Dr. Henry More's *Theological Works*, in English, are extracts, p. 787, &c. Burton, as before, note (i).

³ Cassandri; *ibid.* Burton, as before, p. 304, notes (h) and (l), and the original there.

you know the meaning of this? Berchorius¹ will tell you: "The truth is, whereas the^a kingdom of God consists in these two virtues, justice and mercy, God bestowed on Mary, the Queen of Paradise, the half part of his kingdom, that is, the mercy; and for this cause it is she is called the mother of mercy." The same exposition you may find in Biel²; and Cassander also acknowledgeth this to be the sense of that title given to the blessed Virgin.

In the Litany of our Lady published in English here among us, she is called "queen of angels, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, source of the fountain of grace, refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, and advocate of all Christians³." Now we have no instance of such attributes given to the blessed Virgin, either in the holy Scriptures, or in the writings of the ancient fathers; and indeed they are too big for any mere creature. For here the government of heaven, and all the holy angels therein, is attributed to her, which belongs only to our Lord Christ⁴. And what do they mean by that title which they give her of source of the fountain of grace? I cannot imagine any other meaning of it, than this, that the Virgin Mary receiving first the emanation or efflux of grace, from God the fountain of grace, by and through her all grace is carried and conveyed down to all

¹ Lib. xix. De Moralit. cap. iv. For the original, Burton, p. 304, note (a). Peter Berchorius (or as Du Pin, tom. ii. p. 531, Bercherius) a Frenchman, Prior of St. Eligius, in Paris. He wrote other works relating to morals, and died in 1362. Cave, as before, app. p. 62.

² In Canon. Missæ. lect. lxxx. For the original passage and others, see Rivet's Apology for the Virgin Mary, in his works, tom. iii. p. 674.

³ See the Romish books of devotion; Challoner's Garden of the Soul, p. 298, &c. London, 1831. The Key of Heaven, p. 246. London, 1831, &c.

⁴ Ephes. i. 20—23. "Which he (God the Father) wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

the faithful. And so indeed Bernardinus¹ explains the matter in these words: "No creature² has obtained any grace or virtue from God, but by the dispensation of this pious mother." They that under this notion address themselves to the blessed Virgin, surely do much more than desire her to pray for them, as we desire the prayers of one another.

What do they mean when they say, She is the refuge of sinners? From what hath been said before, concerning the kingdom of mercy, supposed to be committed to the blessed Virgin, and concerning the title of queen of mercy given her, we may conclude the sense to be this, that when sinners are troubled in their consciences, and terrified with the sense of their sins, and of the judgment of God denounced against them, they may and ought to have recourse to her, as the queen of mercy, as their asylum and sanctuary to shelter and protect them from the divine vengeance. This, a credible author assures us³, hath been represented in several Roman Catholic temples, in which Christ hath been painted with an angry menacing countenance, casting his darts against sinners, and the blessed Virgin interposing herself as mediatrix and repelling his darts. But Christ our Lord directs poor guilty sinners, whose consciences are oppressed with the burthen of their sins, to a far better refuge, yea, the only refuge they are to fly to, even to Him-

¹ There were several ecclesiastics of the name of Bernardine, in the fifteenth century. Two of these Italians, the first called from Sienna, his birth place, Senensis; the latter, De Bustis, lived and flourished about the years 1426 and 1480. They were both distinguished by their advancing the idolatrous worship of the Virgin Mary. *Cave*, as before, t. ii. appendix, pp. 127, 196. Also, see the index to Rivet's List of Writers, in his Apology for the Virgin Mary, as before.

² Ser. lxi. art. i. c. xxviii. Dr. Burton, in his note, p. 305, note (q), gives the original words.

³ This author is Chemnitz, as Davenant tells us, p. 206, *ibid*. The place referred to is in his Examination of the Council of Trent, above, p. 132, col. 1. where, speaking of invocation of saints (whence Davenant has derived his authorities, in his *Determ.* xlv.), he adds, "Sicut publica pictura," &c.

self; "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matth. xi. 28.

And who can read without the greatest horror, "such a prayer to the blessed Virgin as this that follows" ? "O my lady, holy Mary, I recommend myself into thy blessed trust, and singular custody, and into the bosom of thy mercy, this night and evermore, and in the hour of my death, as also my soul and my body : And I yield unto thee all my hope and consolation, all my distress and miseries, my life and the end thereof, that by thy most holy intercession, and by thy merits, all my works may be directed according to thine and thy Son's will. Amen." What fuller expressions can we use to declare our absolute affiance, trust and dependence on the eternal Son of God himself, than they here use in this recommendation to the Virgin ? And who observes not that the will of the blessed Virgin is expressly joined with the will of her Son, as the rule of our actions, and that so, as that her will is set in the first place ? A smatch of their old blasphemous impiety, in advancing the mother above the Son, and giving her a commanding power over him. Yet this recommendation to the blessed Virgin is to be seen in a manual of prayers and litanies printed at Antwerp, no longer ago than 1671, and that by superior permission², and appointed to be used in the evening prayer for Friday. The book I had from a near relation of mine (who had been seduced to the Church of Rome, but afterwards returned again to the communion of the Church of England), who assured me, that she herself used it, by direction of her confessor, in her private devotions.

There was a book published (and that too by superior permission) and in great vogue among our English Catholics in the reign of King James II.

¹ See Key of Heaven, as before, p. 159, &c.

² Permissu superiorum.

entituled, *Contemplations of the Life and Glory of the holy Mary*¹, wherein you may find these words, "God hath by a solemn covenant pronounced Mary to be the treasury of wisdom, grace, and sanctity, under Jesus. So that, whatsoever gifts are bestowed upon us by Jesus, we receive them by the mediation of Mary, no one being gracious to Jesus, who is not devoted to Mary; nor hath any one been specially confident of the patronage of Mary, who hath not through her received a special blessing from Jesus. Whence it is one great mark of the predestination of the elect, to be singularly devoted to Mary, since she hath a full power as a mother, to obtain of Jesus whatever He can ask of God the Father, and is comprehended within the sphere of man's predestination to glory, redemption from sin, and regeneration by grace. Neither hath any one petitioned Mary, who was refused by Jesus, nor trusted in Mary, and was abandoned by Jesus." Afterwards he tells us, p. 9, "That though the condition of some great sinners may be so deplorable, that all the limited excellency, merits, and power of all the saints and angels cannot effectually bend the mercies of Jesus to relieve them, yet such is the acceptableness of the mother of Jesus, to Jesus, that whosoever is under the verge of her protection may confide in her intercessions to Jesus." There needs no comment to set forth the horridness of these assertions. Upon the whole matter, I cannot but think those silly women of Arabia, who once a year offered a cake in honour to the blessed Virgin as queen of heaven, to be as excusable at least as her devotees in the Church of Rome. And yet they in their days were thought worthy of a place in the

¹ In Gibson's collection, already referred to, vol. ii. title vi. p. 180, &c. vol. iii. title xii. pp. 3, 25, are three several treatises on the worship of the Virgin Mary, by Dr. Clagett, Bishop Fleetwood, and Bishop Patrick. That by Fleetwood, p. 3, &c. is levelled directly against the *Contemplations*, &c. Also Stillingfleet's works, vol. v. p. 530, &c.

catalogue of heretics¹. Sure I am, most of the arguments Epiphanius useth against the Colliridians, may serve every whit as well against the papists².

To pass by the worship of images, allowed and practised in the Church of Rome, of which I have said enough before.

Come we now to the principal part of the Christian worship, the holy sacrament of the Eucharist. How lamentably hath the Church of Rome vitiated the primitive institution of that most sacred rite! She hath taken from the laity the blessed cup, contrary to our blessed Saviour's express command, as expounded by the practice of the Apostles, and of the universal Church of Christ, for the first ten centuries, as hath been above observed³.

All the learned advocates of the Roman Church, with all their sophistry, have not been able to defend her in this matter, from manifest sacrilege, and a violation of the very essentials of the sacrament, as to the laity administered, nor can they prove it so administered, to be a perfect sacrament. He that would see this in a short compass fully proved, and all the weak evasions of the Romanists obviated, may consult our learned bishop Davenant⁴. Besides, the whole administration of it is so clogged, so metaphorized and defaced by the addition of a multitude⁵ of ceremonies,

¹ Epiphaniî Hæres. 79.

² Dr. Clagett, as referred to in last note, p. 213, speaks of this place in Epiphanius; which Petavius, the learned Jesuit, in his edition of Epiphanius, finding unanswerable, passes silently over. See also Rivet's admirable work, *Apologia pro Sanct. Virgine Maria*, lib. ii. chap. vii. p. 691, and his *Catholicus Orthodoxus*, in tract ii. quæst. civi. p. 275, &c. in the third vol. of his works. Usher, *ibid.* the section beginning with, "But now what saith," &c.

³ See p. 37 of this tract, and note there.

⁴ *Determ.* (quæst. lviii.) In his Determination, of the twenty-first question, that the Roman Church is apostatical, p. 104.

⁵ See to this purpose, Bishop Jewel's *Apology of the Church of England*, and its Defence, in his works, part i. p. 278, &c. London, 1611. Rainold's Conference with Hart, p. 501, &c. London, 1598. Gibson's *Preservative*, vol. ii. title vi. p. 55, &c. in Payne's tract on

and those some of them more becoming the stage than the table of our Lord, that if the blessed apostles were alive, and present at the celebration of the mass in the Roman Church, they would be amazed, and wonder what the meaning of it was; sure I am, they would never own it to be that same ordinance which they left to the churches.

But the worst ceremony of all is the elevation of the Host, to be adored by the people, as very Christ himself under the appearance of bread, whole Christ, God and Man¹, while they neglect the old, the lifting² up their hearts to heaven, where whole Christ indeed is³. A practice this is, which nothing can excuse from the grossest idolatry, but their gross stupidity, or rather infatuation, in thinking that a piece of bread can by any means whatsoever, or howsoever consecrated and blessed, become their very God and Saviour. A very sad excuse indeed. Moreover, by what reason, by what Scripture, by what example or practice of the primitive churches, can the Romanists defend their carrying about the holy sacrament in procession, or the mockery of their solitary masses? I might pass from the holy Eucharist, to the other sacrament of Baptism, and expose the many strange ceremonies used in the Roman Church in the consecration of the font, and in the very administration of that sacrament. I might also take notice of the prayers used by the order of the Roman Church in the consecration or blessing of certain inanimate things, for the producing supernatural effects,

the Sacrifice of the Mass, where we, among other things, are reminded that the Church of England calls the Romish Mass, in its 31st article, "a blasphemous fable."

¹ *Θεὸς ἄνθρωπος.*

² *Sursum corda.* See the various tracts on Transubstantiation, and Adoration of the Host; in Gibson's Collection, vol. ii. title vii. p. 152, &c. by Clagett, Patrick, Stillingfleet, Williams, Wake, and Payne; also that on Communion in one Kind, by Payne.

³ Refer to Bingham, *ibid.* book xv. chap. iii. § 8, *Bona*, *ibid.* lib. ii. c. x. n. 1.

such as curing diseases, driving away devils, &c. without any warrant from Scripture, or promise of God, that such effects shall follow¹. But I shall stop here.

I have now gone through the several heads of discourse which I proposed to myself, and sufficiently I think proved that the Church of Rome hath altered the primitive ecclesiastical government, changed the primitive canon or rule of faith, and, lastly, miserably corrupted the primitive liturgy and form of divine worship. For these reasons laid together, I can never be induced to enter into the communion of the Roman Church as now it is; and for the same reason, to speak my mind freely, I wonder how so learned a man as Monsieur de Meaux can with a good and quiet conscience continue in it.

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.”—Jer. vi. 16.

¹ Hospinian's works, *De Templis* and *De Festis*, may be consulted; Rainoldi de *Idololatria*, &c. Also, *The Conformity between Modern and Ancient Ceremonies*, London, 1745, translated from the French.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS
OF THE
REFORMERS AND FATHERS
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND:
No. I.

EXTRACTS FROM TYNDAL'S PROLOGUES TO
THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES.



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As these early Reformers, living before James the First's reign, had not the advantage of possessing that best translation of the Scriptures, our Authorized Version, the text of the latter has been substituted for their quotations from the older and less correct versions. And a few verbal alterations have been made, in order to remove obscurities.

EXTRACTS,

FROM PROLOGUES TO THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES,
BY WILLIAM TYNDAL¹.

*From a Prologue showing the use of the Scripture,
which he wrote before the five books of Moses.*

THOUGH a man had a precious jewel, and a rich, yet if he wist not the value thereof, nor wherefore it served, he were neither the better nor richer of a straw. Even so, though we read the Scripture, and babble of it never so much, yet if we know not the use of it, and wherefore it was given, and what is therein to be sought, it profiteth us nothing at all. It is not enough, therefore, to read and talk of it only, but we must also desire God, day and night, instantly to open our eyes, and to make us understand and feel wherefore the Scripture was given, that we may apply the medicine of the Scripture, every man to his own sores; unless then we intend to be idle disputers, and brawlers about vain words, ever gnawing upon the bitter bark without, and never attaining unto the sweet pith within; and persecuting one another in defending of lewd imaginations, and phantasies of our own invention.

Paul, in the 3d of the second Epistle to Timothy, saith, "that the Scripture is profitable for doctrine," (for *that* ought men to teach, and not dreams of their own making, as the Pope doth,) and also "for correction;" for the Scripture is the touch-stone that

¹ William Tyndal, the most learned of the English Reformers, suffered martyrdom by fire, at Vilvorden, in Flanders, in 1534.

trieth all doctrines, and by that we know the false from the true. And in the 6th to the Ephesians he calleth it "the sword of the Spirit," because it killeth hypocrites, and uttereth¹ and improveth² their false inventions. And in the 15th to the Romans he saith, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." That is, the ensamples that are in the Scripture comfort us in all our tribulations, and make us to put our trust in God, and patiently to abide his leisure. And in the 10th of the first to the Corinthians, he bringeth in examples of the Scripture to fear³ us, and to bridle the flesh, that we cast not the yoke of the law of God from off our necks, and fall to lusting and doing of evil

So now the Scripture is a light, and showeth us the true way both what to do and what to hope for, and a defence from all error, and a comfort in adversity, that we despair not, and search⁴ us in prosperity, that we sin not. Seek therefore in the Scripture, as thou readeest it, first the law, what God commandeth us to do; and secondarily, the promises, which God promiseth us again, namely in Christ Jesus our Lord. Then seek ensamples, first of comfort, how God purgeth all them that submit themselves to walk in his ways, in the purgatory⁴ of tribulation, delivering them yet at the latter end, and never suffering any of them to perish that cleave fast to his promises. And, finally, note the ensamples which are written, to fear⁵ the flesh, that we sin not: that is, how God suffereth the ungodly and wicked sinners that resist God, and refuse to follow him, to continue in their wickedness; ever waxing worse and worse, until their sin be so ~~more~~ increased, and so abominable, that if they should ~~longer~~ endure they would corrupt the very elect. But for the elect's sake God sendeth them preachers.

¹ Declareth.² Disproveth.³ To make us fear.⁴ Cleansing fire.⁵ A'arm.

Nevertheless, they harden their hearts against the truth, and God destroyeth them utterly, and beginneth the world anew.

This comfort shalt thou evermore find in the plain text and literal sense. Neither is there any story so homely, so rude, yea, or so vile, (as it seemeth outward) wherein is not exceeding great comfort. And when some, which seem to themselves great clerks¹, say, 'They wot not what more profit is in many histories of the Scripture, if they be read without an allegory, than in a tale of Robin Hood: say thou that they were written for our consolation and comfort, that we despair not, if such like happen unto us.

As thou readest, therefore, think that every syllable pertaineth to thine own self, and suck out the pith of the Scripture, and arm thyself against all assaults. First note with strong faith the power of God, in creating all of nought; then mark the grievous fall of Adam, and of us all in him, through the light regarding of the commandment of God. In the fourth chapter God turneth him unto Abel, and then to his offering, but not to Cain and his offering: where thou seest that though the deeds of the evil appear outwardly as glorious as the deeds of the good; yet in the sight of God, which looketh on the heart, the deed is good because of the man, and not the man good because of his deed. In the sixth God sendeth Noah to preach to the wicked, and giveth them space to repent: they wax hard-hearted, God bringeth them to nought, and yet saveth Noah; even by the same water by which he destroyed them. Mark also what followed the pride of the building of the tower of Babel.

Consider how God sendeth forth Abraham out of his own country into a strange land, full of wicked people, and gave him but a bare promise with him that he would bless and defend him. Abraham, be-

¹ Scholars.

lieved, and that word saved and delivered him in all perils; so that we see how that man's life is not maintained by bread only, (as Christ saith) but much rather by believing the promises of God. Behold how soberly, and how circumspectly, both Abraham and also Isaac behave themselves among the infidels. Abraham buyeth that which might have been given him for nought, to cut off occasions. Isaac, when his wells, which he had digged, were taken from him, giveth room, and resisteth not. Moreover, they ear¹ and sow, and feed their cattle, and make confederations, and take perpetual truce, and do all outward things; even as they do which have no faith, for God hath not made us to be idle in this world. Every man must work godly and truly to the uttermost of the power that God hath given him; and yet not trust therein, but in God's word or promise, and God will work with us, and bring that we do to good effect: and then, when our power will extend no further, God's promises will work all alone.

How many things also resisted the promises of God to Jacob! And yet Jacob conjureth God with his own promises, saying, "O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac! The Lord! which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him," &c. And God delivered him, and will likewise all that call unto his promises with a repenting heart, were they never so great sinners. Mark also the weak infirmities of the man. He loveth one wife more than another, one son more than another. And see how God purgeth him, Esau threateneth him; Laban be-

¹ Plough.

guileth him; the beloved wife is long barren; his daughter is ravished; his concubine is defiled, and that by his own son. Rachel dieth, Joseph is taken away, yea, and, as he supposed, rent of wild beasts. And yet how glorious was his end! Note the weakness of his children, yea, and the sin of them, and how God through their own wickedness saved them. These ensamples teach us, that a man is not at once perfect the first day he beginneth to live well. They that be strong, therefore, must suffer with the weak, and help to keep them in unity and peace, one with another, until they be stronger.

Note what the brethren said when they were arrested in Egypt: "We are verily guilty (said they) concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." By which ensample thou seest how that conscience of evil doings findeth men out at last. But namely¹, in tribulation and adversity; there temptation, and also desperation, yea, and the very pains of hell, find us out: there the soul feeleth the fierce wrath of God, and wisheth mountains to fall on her, and to hide her (if it were possible) from the angry face of God.

Mark, also, how great evils follow of how little an occasion. Dinah goeth but forth alone to see the daughters of the country, and how great mischief and trouble followed! Jacob loved but one son more than another, and how grievous murder followed in their hearts! These are examples for our learning to teach us to walk warily and circumspectly in the world of weak people, that we give no man occasions of evil.

Finally, see what God promised Joseph in his dreams. Those promises accompanied him always, and went down with him even into the deep dungeon,

¹ Particularly.

and brought him up again, and never forsook him till all that was promised was fulfilled. These are ensamples written for our learning, (as Paul saith) to teach us to trust in God in the strong fire of tribulation, and purgatory¹ of our flesh. And that they which submit themselves to follow God, should note and mark such things; for their learning and comfort is the fruit of the Scripture, and cause why it was written. And with such a purpose to read it, is the way to everlasting life, and to those joyful blessings that are promised unto all nations in the seed of Abraham, which seed is Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be honour and praise for ever, and unto God our Father through him.

*A Prologue to the second book of Moses, called
Exodus.*

Of the preface upon Genesis mayest thou understand how to behave thyself in this book also, and in all other books of the Scripture. Cleave unto the text and plain story, and endeavour thyself to search out the meaning of all that is described therein, and the true sense of all manner of speakings of the Scripture; and beware of subtle allegories.

And note every thing earnestly as things pertaining unto thine own heart and soul.

For as God used² himself unto them of the Old Testament, even so shall he unto the world's end use himself unto us, which have received his holy Scripture, and the testimony of his son Jesus. As God doth all things here for them that believe his promises, and hearken unto his commandments, and with patience cleave unto him, and walk with him: even so shall he do for us, if we receive the witness of Christ with a strong faith, and endure patiently, following his steps. And on the other side,

¹ Trial of our flesh by suffering.

² Dealt with them.

as they that fell from the promise of God through unbelief, and from his law and ordinances, through impatience of their own lusts, were forsaken of God; and so perished; even so shall we, as many as do likewise, and as many as mock with the doctrine of Christ, and make a cloak of it to live fleshly, and to follow our lusts.

Note thereto how God is found true at the last; and how, when all is past remedy, and brought into desperation, he then fulfilleth his promises, and that by an abject and a cast-away, a despised, and a refused person¹; yea, and by a way impossible to believe.

The cause of all the captivity of God's people is this: the world ever hated them for their faith and trust which they have in God: but in vain, till they fall from the faith of the promises and love of the law and ordinances of God, and put their trust in holy deeds of their own finding, and live altogether at their own lust and pleasure, without regard of God, or respect of their neighbour. Then God forsaketh us, and sendeth us into captivity for our dishonouring of his name, and despising of our neighbour. But the world persecuteth us for our faith in Christ only, and not for our wicked living. God persecuteth us because we abuse his holy Testament², and because, when we know the truth we follow it not.

Note, also, the mighty hand of the Lord, how he playeth with his adversaries, and provoketh them, and stirreth them up a little and a little, and delivereth not his people in an hour; that both the patience of his elect, and also the worldly wit and wily policy of the wicked, wherewith they do fight against God, may appear.

Mark the long-suffering and soft patience of Moses, and how he loveth the people, and is ever between the wrath of God and them, and is ready to live and die with them, and to be put out of the book that

¹ Namely, Moses.

² Covenant.

God had written for their sakes, (as Paul for his brethren, Rom. ix.) and how he taketh his own wrongs patiently, and never avengeth himself.

Note also, how God sendeth his promise to the people, and Moses confirmeth it with miracles, and the people believe. But when temptation cometh they fall into unbelief, and few bide standing. Where thou seest that all be not Christian that will be so called, and that the cross trieth the true from the feigned; for if the cross were not, Christ should have disciples enough. Whereof also thou seest, what an excellent gift of God true faith is, and impossible to be had without the Spirit of God. For it is above all natural power, that a man in time of temptation, when God scourgeth him, should believe then stedfastly how that God loveth him, and careth for him, and hath prepared all good things for him, and that that scourging is an earnest that God hath elected and chosen him.

Note how oft Moses stirred them up to believe and trust in God, putting them in remembrance alway in time of temptation of the miracles and wonders that God hath wrought before time in their eye-sight. How diligently also forbiddeth he all that might withdraw their hearts from God! To put nought to God's word, to take nought therefrom: to do only that which is right in the sight of the Lord; that they should make no manner [of] image, to kneel down before it; yea, that they should make none altar of hewed stone, for fear of images; to flee the heathen idolaters utterly, and to destroy their idols, and cut down their groves where they worshipped: and that they should not take the daughters of them unto their sons, nor give their daughters to the sons of them. And that whosoever moved any of them to worship false gods, howsoever nigh of kin he were, they must accuse him, and bring him to death: yea, and whosoever they heard of man, woman, or city that worshipped false gods, they should slay them, and destroy

the city for ever, and not build it again. And all because they should worship nothing but God, nor put confidence in any thing, save in his word.

How also doth he provoke them to love : ever rehearsing the benefits of God done to them already, and the godly promises that were to come ! And how goodly laws of love giveth he, to help one another : and that a man should not hate his neighbour in his heart, but love him as himself, Lev. xix. And what a charge giveth he in every place over the poor and needy ; over the stranger, friendless and widow ! And when he desireth to show mercy, he rehearseth withal the benefits of God done to them at their need, that they might see a cause, at the least in God, to show mercy of very love unto their neighbours at their need.

Also there is no law so simple in appearance, throughout all the five books of Moses, but that there is a great reason of the making thereof, if a man search diligently. As that a man is forbid to seeth a kid in his mother's milk, moveth us unto compassion, and to be pitiful. As doth also that a man should not offer the sire, or dam, and the young both in one day. (Lev. xxii.) For it might seem a cruel thing, inasmuch as his mother's milk is, as it were, his blood ; wherefore God will not have him sod therein ; but will have a man show courtesy upon the very beasts. As in another place he commandeth that we muzzle not the ox that treadeth out the corn, (which manner of threshing is used in hot countries,) and that because we should much rather be liberal, and kind, unto men that do us service.

Of the ceremonies, sacrifices, and tabernacle, with all its glory and pomp, understand that they were not permitted only, but also commanded of God, to lead the people in the shadows of Moses, and night of the Old Testament, until the light of Christ, and day of the New Testament, were come. As children are led in the phantasies of youth, until the discretion

of man's age be come upon them. And all was done to keep them from idolatry.

The tabernacle was ordained to the intent they might have a place appointed them to do their sacrifices openly in the sight of the people, and namely, of the priests which waited thereon; that it might be seen that they did all things according to God's word, and not after the idolatry of their own imagination. And the costliness of the tabernacle, and the beauty also pertained thereunto, that they should see nothing so beautiful among the heathen, but that they should see more beautiful and wonderful at home; because they should not be moved to follow them.

And in like manner the divers fashions of sacrifices and ceremonies was to occupy their minds, that they should have no lust to follow the heathen; and the multitude of them was, that they should have so much to do in keeping them, that they should have no leisure to imagine other of their own: yea, and that God's word might be thereby in all that they did, that they might have their faith and trust in God, which he cannot have that followeth either his own inventions, or traditions of men's making, without God's word.

A Prologue to the Third Book of Moses, called Leviticus.

THE ceremonies which are described in the book following were chiefly ordained of God, (as I said in the end of the Prologue upon Exodus,) to occupy the minds of that people the Israelites, and to keep them from serving of God after the imagination of their blind zeal and good intent; that their consciences might be stablished, and they sure that they pleased God therein, which were impossible, if a man did of his own head that which was not commanded of God. ~~and~~ depended of any appointment made be-

tween him and God. Such ceremonies were unto them as an ABC, to learn to spell and read; and as a nurse, to feed them with milk and pap, and to speak unto them after their own capacity, and to lisp the words unto them, according as the babes and children of that age might sound them again. For all that were before Christ were in the infancy and childhood of the world, and saw that sun, which we see openly, but through a cloud, and had but feeble and weak imaginations of Christ, as children have of men's deeds, a few prophets excepted, which yet described him unto other in sacrifices and ceremonies, likenesses, riddles, proverbs, and dark and strange speaking, until the full age were come, that God would show him openly unto the whole world, and deliver them from their shadows and cloud-light, and the heathen out of their dead sleep of stark blind ignorance. And as the shadow vanisheth away at the coming of the light, even so do the ceremonies and sacrifices at the coming of Christ; and are henceforth no more necessary than a token left in remembrance of a bargain, is necessary when the bargain is fulfilled. And though they seem childish, yet they be not altogether fruitless; as the puppets, and twenty manner of trifles, which mothers permit unto their young children, be not all in vain. For albeit that such fantasies be permitted to satisfy the children's desires, yet in that they are the mother's gift, and be done in place and time at her commandment, they keep the children in awe, and make them know the mother, and also make them more apt against a more stronger age to obey in things of greater earnest.

And moreover, though sacrifices and ceremonies can be no ground or foundation to build upon; that is, though we can prove nought with them: yet when we have once found out Christ and his mysteries, then we may borrow figures, that is to say, allegories, similitudes, or examples to open Christ,

14. *Prologues to the Five Books of Moses.*

and the secrets of God hid in Christ, even unto the quick, and to declare them more lively and sensibly with them than with all the words of the world. For similitudes have more virtue and power with them than bare words, and lead a man's wits farther into the pith and marrow and spiritual understanding of the thing, than all the words that can be imagined. And though also that all the ceremonies and sacrifices have as it were, a starlight of Christ, yet some there be that have, as it were, the light of the broad day, a little before the sun rising, and express him, and the circumstances and virtue of his death so plainly, as if we should show his passion openly before the eyes of the people : as the scape goat, the brazen serpent, the ox burnt without the host, the passover lamb, &c. Insomuch that I am fully persuaded, and cannot but believe, that God had showed Moses the secrets of Christ, and the very manner of his death beforehand, and commanded him to ordain them for the confirmation of our faith, which are now in the clear daylight. And I believe also that the prophets, which followed Moses to confirm his prophecies, and to maintain his doctrine unto Christ's coming, were moved by such things to search farther of Christ's secrets. And though God would not have the secrets of Christ generally known, save unto a few familiar friends, which in that infancy he made of man's wit¹ to help the other babes; yet as they had a general promise that one of the seed of Abraham should come and bless them, even so they had a general faith that God would by the same man save them, though they wist not by what means; as the very apostles, when it was oft told them, yet they could never comprehend it, till it was fulfilled in deed.

And beyond all this, their sacrifices and ceremonies, as far forth as the promises annexed unto them extend, so far forth they saved them and justified

¹ Whom he made to be of man's understanding.

them, and stood them in the same stead as our Sacraments do us; not by the power of the sacrifice or deed itself, but by the virtue of the faith in the promise, which the sacrifice or ceremony preached, and whereof it was a token or sign. For the ceremonies and sacrifices were left with them, and commanded them to keep the promise in remembrance, and to wake up their faith. As it is not enough to send many on errands, and to tell them what they shall do; but they must have a remembrance with them, and it be but a ring of a rush about one of their fingers. And as it is not enough to make a bargain with words only, but we must put thereto an oath, and give earnest to confirm the faith of the person with whom it is made. And in like manner if a man promise, whatsoever trifle it be, it is not believed except he hold up his finger also; such is the weakness of the world. And therefore Christ himself used oftentimes divers ceremonies in curing the sick, to stir up their faith withal. As for an ensample: it was not the blood of the Lamb that saved them in Egypt, when the angel smote the Egyptians; but the mercy of God, and his truth, whereof that blood was a token and remembrance, to stir up their faiths withal. For though God make a promise, yet it saveth none finally, but them that long for it, and pray God with a strong faith to fulfil it, for his mercy and truth only. And even so our Sacraments (if they be truly ministered) preach Christ unto us, and lead our faith unto Christ; by which faith our sins are done away, and not by the deed or work of the Sacrament. For as it was impossible that the blood of calves should put away sin; even so is it impossible that the water of the river should wash our hearts. Nevertheless, the Sacraments cleanse us, and absolve us of our sins as the priests do, in preaching of repentance and faith, for which cause both of them were ordained; but if they preach not, whether it be the priest or the Sacrament, so profit they not.

And if a man allege¹ Christ, (John in the 3d chapter,) saying, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," and will therefore that the Holy Ghost be present in the water, and therefore the very deed or work doth put away sin; then I will send him unto Paul, which asketh his Galatians whether they received the Holy Ghost by the deed of the law, or by preaching of faith; and there concludeth that the Holy Ghost accompanieth the preaching of faith, and with the word of faith entereth the heart and purgeth it; which thou mayest also understand by St. Paul saying, "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." So now if baptism preach me the washing in Christ's blood, so doth the Holy Ghost accompany it; and that deed of preaching, through faith, doth put away my sins. For the Holy Ghost is no dumb God. If a man say of the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood, that it is a sacrifice as well for the dead as for the quick, and therefore the very deed itself justifieth and putteth away sin; I answer, that it is properly no sacrifice, but a sacrament, and a memorial of that everlasting sacrifice once for all, which he offered upon the cross now fifteen hundred years ago, and preacheth only unto them that are alive. And as for them that be dead, it is as profitable unto them as is a candle in a lantern, without light, unto them that walk by the way in dark night; and as the gospel sung in Latin is unto them that understand none at all, and as a sermon preached to him that is dead, and heareth it not. It preacheth unto them that are alive only; for they that be dead, if they died in the faith which that Sacrament preacheth, they be safe, and are past all jeopardy. For when they were alive their hearts loved the law of God, and therefore sinned not, and were sorry that their members sinned, and over moved

to sin, and therefore, through faith, it was forgiven them. And now their sinful members be dead; so that they can now sin no more; wherefore it is unto them that be dead neither Sacrament nor sacrifice.

Farthermore, because that few know the use of the Old Testament, and the most part think it nothing necessary but to make allegories, which they feign every man after his own brain at all wild adventure, without any certain rule; therefore (though I have spoken of them in another place,) yet, lest the book come not to all men's hands that shall read this, I will speak of them here also a word or twain.

We had need to take heed every where that we be not beguiled with false allegories, whether they be drawn out of the New Testament or the Old, either out of any other story, or of the creatures of the world, but namely¹ in this book.

First, allegories prove nothing; (and, by allegories, understand examples or similitudes borrowed of strange matters, and of another thing than thou treatest of.) As though circumcision be a figure of baptism, yet thou canst not prove baptism by circumcision. For this argument were very feeble, "the Israelites were circumcised, therefore we must be baptised." And in like manner, though the offering of Isaac were a figure or ensample of the resurrection, yet is this argument nought, "Abraham would have offered Isaac, but God delivered him from death, therefore we shall rise again," and so forth in all other.

But the very use of allegories is to declare and open a text, that it may be the better perceived and understood. As when I have a clear text of Christ and the apostles, that I must be baptised, then I may borrow an example of circumcision to express the nature, power, and fruit, or effect of baptism. For as circumcision was unto them a common badge,

¹ Particularly.

signifying that they were all soldiers of God, to war his war, and separating them from all other nations, disobedient unto God: even so baptism is our common badge, and sure earnest, and perpetual memorial, that we pertain unto Christ, and are separated from all that are not Christ's. And as circumcision was a token certifying them that they were received unto the favour of God, and their sins forgiven them; even so baptism certifieth us that we are washed in the blood of Christ, and received to favour for his sake; and as circumcision signified unto them the cutting away of their own lusts, and slaying of their free-will, as they call it, to follow the will of God, even so baptism signifieth unto us repentance, and the mortifying of our unruly members and body of sin, to walk in a new life, and so forth.

And likewise, though that the saving of Noah, and of them that were with him in the ship, through water, is a figure, that is to say an example and likeness of baptism, as Peter maketh it, (1 Pet. iii.) yet I cannot prove baptism therewith, but describe it only. For as the ship saved them in the water through faith, in that they believed God, and as the others that would not believe Noah perished; even so baptism saveth us through the word of faith which it preacheth, when all the world of the unbelieving perish. And Paul (1 Cor. x.) maketh the sea and the cloud a figure of baptism, by which, and a thousand more, I might declare it, but not prove it. Paul also, in the said place, maketh the rock out of which Moses brought water unto the children of Israel, a figure or ensample of Christ; not to prove Christ (for that were impossible,) but to describe Christ only; even as Christ himself (John iii.) borroweth a similitude or figure of the brazen serpent, to lead Nicodemus from his earthly imagination into the spiritual understanding of Christ's saying: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth

in him should not perish, but have eternal life." By which similitude, the virtue of Christ's death is better described than thou couldest declare it with a thousand words. For as those murmurers against God, as soon as they repented, were healed of their deadly wounds, through looking on the brazen serpent only, without medicine or any other help, yea, and without any other reason but that God hath said it should be so, and were not to murmur again, but to leave their murmuring: even so all that repent, and believe in Christ, are saved from everlasting death, of pure grace, without, and before, their good works, and are not to sin again, but to fight against sin, and henceforth to sin no more.

Even so with the ceremonies of this book thou canst prove nothing, but describe, and declare only the putting away of our sins through the death of Christ. For Christ is Aaron and Aaron's sons, and all that offer the sacrifice to purge sin. And Christ is all manner of offering that is offered: he is the ox, the sheep, the goat, the kid, and lamb: he is the ox that is burnt without the host, and the scape-goat that carried all the sin of the people away into the wilderness: for as they purged the people from their worldly uncleannesses through blood of the sacrifices, even so doth Christ purge us from the uncleannesses of everlasting death with his own blood; and as their worldly sins could no otherwise be purged than by blood of sacrifices, even so can our sins be no otherwise forgiven than through the blood of Christ. All the deeds in the world, save the blood of Christ, can purchase no forgiveness of sins; for our deeds do but help our neighbour, and mortify the flesh, and help that we sin no more; but and if we have sinned, it must be freely forgiven through the blood of Christ, or remain ever.

Finally, beware of allegories; for there is not a more apt thing to beguile withal than an allegory; nor a more subtle and pestilent thing in the world to

persuade a false matter than an allegory. And contrariwise; there is not a better, vehementer, or mightier thing to make a man understand withal than an allegory. For allegories make a man quick witted, and print wisdom in him; and make it to abide, where bare words go but in at the one ear, and out at the other. As this, with such like sayings: "Put salt to all your sacrifices;" instead of this sentence, "Do all your deeds with discretion," greeteth and biteth, (if it be understood) more than plain words. And when I say, instead of these words, "Boast not yourself of your good deeds," "eat not the blood, nor the fat of your sacrifice;" there is as great difference between them as there is distance between heaven and earth. For the life and beauty of all good deeds is of God, and we are ~~only~~ the instrument whereby God worketh, but the power is his. As God created Paul anew, poured his wisdom into him, gave him might, and promised him that his grace should never fail him, &c. and all without deserving, except that murdering the saints, and making them curse and rail on Christ, be meritorious. Now, as it is death to eat the blood or fat of any sacrifice, is it not (think ye,) damnable to rob God of his honour, and to glorify myself with his honour?

The Prologue to the fourth book of Moses, called Numbers.

In the second and third book they received the law; and in this fourth they begin to work and to practise. Of which practising ye see many ensamples of unbelief, and what free will doth; when she taketh in hand to keep the law of her own power, without help of faith in the promises of God: how she leaveth her master's carcasses by the way in the wilderness, and bringeth them not into the land of rest. Why could they not enter in? Because of their unbelief.

(Heb. iii.) For had they believed, so had they been under grace, and their old sins had been forgiven them: and power should have been given them to have fulfilled the law thenceforth, and they should have been kept from all temptations that had been too strong for them. For it is written, (John i.) "To them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Now to be the son of God is to love God and his commandments, and to walk in his way after the ensample of his Son Christ. But these people took upon them to work without faith, as thou seest in the xivth of this book, where they would fight, and also did, without the word of promise; even when they were warned that they should not. And in the xvth again, they would please God with their holy, faithless works (for where God's word is not, there can be no faith,) but the fire of God consumed their holy works, as it did Nadab and Abihu. (Levit. x.) And from these unbelievers turn thine eyes unto the Pharisees, which before the coming of Christ in his flesh had laid the foundation of free-will after the same ensample. Whereon they built holy works after their own imagination, without faith of the word, so fervently, that for the great zeal of them, they slew the King of all holy works, and the Lord of freewill, which only through his grace maketh the will free, and looseth her from bondage of sin, and giveth her love and desire unto the laws of God, and power to fulfil them. And so through their holy works done by the power of freewill, they excluded themselves out of the holy rest of forgiveness of sins by faith in the blood of Christ.

And now, seeing that faith only letteth a man in unto rest, and unbelief excludeth him, what is the cause of this unbelief? verily no sin that the world seeth, but a righteousness of their¹ own imagination, as Paul saith, Rom. x. "They being ignorant of

¹ Here he speaks of the popish priests and monastic orders.

God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." And Christ rebuketh not the Pharisees for gross sins which the world saw, but for those holy deeds which so bleared the eyes of the world, that they were taken as gods; even for long prayers, for fasting, for tithing so diligently that they left not so much as their herbs untithed, for their cleanness in washing before meat, and for washing of cups, dishes, and all manner of vessels, for building the prophets' sepulchres, and for keeping the holy day, and for turning the heathen unto the faith, and for giving of alms. For unto such holy deeds they ascribed righteousness, and therefore when the righteousness of God was preached unto them they could not but persecute it, the devil was so strong in them: which thing Christ well describeth, (Luke xi.) saying, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first." That is, when they be a little cleansed from gross sins which the world seeth, and then made gay in their own sight, with the righteousness of traditions, then cometh seven, that is to say, the whole power of the devil: for seven with the Hebrews signifieth a multitude without number, and the extremity of a thing, and is a speech borrowed (I suppose) out of Leviticus, where is so oft mention made of seven. And so here by seven is meant all the devils of hell, and all the might and power of the devil. For unto what further blindness could all the devils in hell bring them, than to make them believe that they were justified through their own good works?

For when they once believed that they were purged from their sins, and made righteous through their own holy works, what room was there left for the righteousness that is in Christ's blood-shedding? And therefore when they be fallen into this blindness, they cannot but hate and persecute the light. And the more clear and evidently their deeds be rebuked, the furiously and maliciously blind are they, until they break out into open blasphemy and sinning against the Holy Ghost, which is the malicious persecuting of the clear truth ~~so~~ manifestly proved, that they cannot once hush against¹ it. As the Pharisees persecuted Christ, because he rebuked their holy² deeds. And when he proved his doctrine with the Scripture and miracles, yet though they could not improve³ him, nor reason against him, they taught that the Scripture must have some other meaning, because his interpretation undermined their foundation, and plucked up by the roots the sects which they had planted, and they ascribed also his miracles to the devil. And in like manner, though our hypocrites cannot deny but this is the Scripture, yet because there can be no other sense gathered thereof, but that overthroweth their buildings, therefore they ever think that it hath some other meaning than as the words sound, and that no man understandeth it, or understood it since the time of the apostles. Or if they think that some writer that wrote upon it since the apostles, understood it, they yet think that we, in like manner as we understand not the text itself, so we understand not the meaning of the words of that writer. For when thou layest⁴ the justifying of holy works, and denyest the justifying of faith, how canst thou understand St. Paul, Peter, John, and the Acts of the Apostles, or any Scripture at all, seeing the

¹ Object to.

² Which they accounted holy.

³ Confute.

⁴ Allowest.

justifying of faith is almost all that they intend to prove?

Finally, concerning vows, whereof thou readest in the xxxth chapter, there may be many questions, whereunto I answer shortly, that we ought to put salt to all our offerings; that is, we ought to minister knowledge in all our works, and to do nothing whereof we could not give a reason out of God's words. We be now in the daylight, and all the secrets of God, and all his counsel and will is opened unto us, and He that was promised should come and bless us, is come already, and hath shed his blood for us, and hath blessed us with all manner of blessings, and hath obtained all grace for us, and in him we have all. Wherefore God henceforth will receive no more sacrifices of beasts of us, as thou readest, Heb. x. If thou burn unto God the blood or fat of beasts, to obtain forgiveness of sins thereby, or that God should the better hear thy request, then thou dost wrong unto the blood of Christ, and Christ unto thee is dead in vain. For in him God hath promised not forgiveness of sins only, but also whatsoever we ask to keep us from sin and temptation withal. Moreover, if thou offer gold, silver, or any other good for the same intent, is there any difference? And even so if thou go in pilgrimage, or observest whatsoever ceremony it be, for like meaning, then it is like abomination. We must therefore bring the salt of the knowledge of God's word with all our sacrifices, or else we shall make no sweet savour unto God thereof. Thou wilt ask me, shall I vow nothing at all? yes, God's commandment which thou hast vowed in thy baptism. For what intent? verily for the love of Christ which hath bought thee with his blood, and made thee son and heir of God with him, that thou shouldest wait on his will and commandments, and purify thy members according to the same doctrine that hath purified thine heart; for if the knowledge of God's word hath not purified thine heart so

that thou consentest unto the law of God that it is righteous and good, and sorrowest that thy members move thee unto the contrary; so hast thou no part with Christ. For if thou repent not of thy sin, so it is impossible that thou shouldest believe that Christ had delivered thee from the danger thereof. If thou believe not that Christ hath delivered thee, so is it impossible that thou shouldest love God's commandments. If thou love not the commandments, so is Christ's spirit not in thee, which is the earnest of forgiveness of sin, and of salvation.

For Scripture teacheth, first repentance, then faith in Christ, that for his sake sin is forgiven to them that repent; then good works, which are nothing save the commandment of God only. And the commandments are nothing else, save the helping of our neighbours at their need, and the taming of our members, that they might be pure also, as the heart is pure through hate of vice and love of virtue, as God's word teacheth us, which works must proceed out of faith: that is, I must do them for the love which I have to God, for that great mercy which he hath showed me in Christ, or else I do them not in the sight of God. And that I faint not in the pain of the slaying of the sin that is in my flesh, mine help is the promise of the assistance of the power of God, and the comfort of the reward to come, which reward I ascribe unto the goodness, mercy, and truth, of the promiser that hath chosen me, called me, taught me, and given me the earnest thereof, and not unto the merits of my doings, or sufferings. For all that I do and suffer is but the way to the reward, and not the deserving thereof. As if the king's grace should promise me to defend me at home in mine own realm, yet the way thither is through the sea, wherein I might haply suffer no little trouble. And yet for all that, if I might live in rest when I come thither, I would think, and so would others say, that my pains were well rewarded; which reward and benefit I

would not proudly ascribe unto the merits of my pains taken by the way, but unto the goodness, mercifulness, and constant truth of the king's grace whose gift it is, and to whom the praise and thanks thereof belongeth of duty and right. So now a reward is a gift given freely of the goodness of the Giver, and not of the deservings of the receiver. Thus it appeareth, that if I vow whatsoever it be, for any other purpose than to tame my members, and to be an ensample of virtue and edifying unto my neighbour, my sacrifice is unsavoury, and clean ¹ without salt, and my lamp without oil, and I one of the foolish virgins, and shall be shut from the feast of the bridegroom when I think myself most sure to enter in.

If I vow voluntary poverty², this must be my purpose, that I will be content with a competent living, which cometh unto me either by succession of mine elders, or which I get truly with my labour in ministering, and doing service unto the commonwealth, in one office or in another, or in one occupation or other, because that riches and honour shall not corrupt my mind, and draw mine heart from God, and to give an example of virtue and edifying unto other, and that my neighbour may have a living by me as well as I. But though I seek no worldly promotion thereby, yet if I do it to be justified therewith, and to get an higher place in heaven, thinking that I do it of my own natural strength, and of the natural power of my freewill, and that every man hath might even so to do, and that they do it not is their fault and negligence, and so with the proud Pharisee in comparison of myself despise the sinful Publicans; what other thing do I than eat the blood and fat of my sacrifice, devouring that myself which should be offered unto God alone, and his Christ? And shortly,

¹ Entirely.

² The members of certain monastic orders were wont to swear that they would be ever poor, yet got together great wealth, in the name of their order.

whatsoever a man doth of his natural gifts, of his natural wit, wisdom, understanding, reason, will, and good intent, before he be otherwise and clean contrary taught of God's Spirit, and have received other wit, understanding, reason, and will; is flesh, worldly, and wrought in abominable blindness, with which a man can but seek himself, his own profit, glory, and honour, even in very spiritual matters. To have heaven for mine own deserving is mine own praise and not Christ's. For I cannot have it by favour and grace in Christ, and by mine own merits also; for free giving and deserving cannot stand together.

*A Prologue to the Fifth Book of Moses, called
Deuteronomy.*

THIS is a book worthy to be read in, day and night, and never to be out of hands. For it is the most excellent of all the books of Moses. It is easy also and light, and a very pure Gospel, that is to wit, a preaching of faith, and love: deducing the love to God out of faith, and the love of a man's neighbour out of the love of God. Herein also thou mayest learn right meditation or contemplation, which is nothing else save the calling to mind, and a repeating in the heart, of the glorious and wonderful deeds of God, and of his terrible handling of his enemies and merciful entreating of them that come when he calleth them, which thing this book doth, and almost nothing else.

In the four first chapters he rehearseth the benefits of God done unto them, to provoke them to love; and his mighty deeds, done above all natural power, and beyond all natural capacity of faith, that they might believe God, and trust in him, and in his strength. And further, he rehearseth the fierce plagues of God upon his enemies, and on them which through impatience and unbelief fell from him; partly to tame and abate the appetites of the flesh which alway fight

against the Spirit, and partly to bridle the wide raging lusts of them in whom was no Spirit; that though they had no power to do good of love, yet at the least, they should abstain from outward evil for fear of wrath, and cruel vengeance which should fall upon them and shortly find them out, if they cast up God's nurture, and run at riot beyond his laws and ordinances.

Moreover he chargeth them to put nought to, nor take ought away from God's words, but to be diligent only to keep them in remembrance, and in the heart, and to teach their children for fear of forgetting. And to beware either of making imagery, or of bowing themselves unto images, saying, Ye saw no image when God spake unto you, but heard a voice only, and that voice keep, and thereunto cleave, for it is your life and it shall save you. And finally if (as the frailty of all flesh is) they shall have fallen from God, and he have brought them into trouble, adversity, and cumbrance and all necessity; yet if they repent and turn, he promiseth them, that God shall remember his mercy, and receive them to grace again.

In the fifth he repeateth the ten commandments, and that they might see a cause to do them of love, he biddeth them remember that they were bound in Egypt, and how God delivered them with a mighty hand, and a stretched out arm, to serve him, and to keep his commandments: as Paul saith that we are bought with Christ's blood, and therefore are his servants, and not our own, and ought to seek his will and honour only, and to love and serve one another for his sake.

In the sixth he setteth out the fountain of all commandments: that is, that they believe how that there is but one God that doth all, and therefore ought only to be loved with all the heart, all the soul, and all the might. For love only is the fulfilling of the commandments, as Paul also saith unto the Romans, and Galatians likewise. He warneth them also that

they forget not the commandments, but teach them their children, and to show their children also how God delivered them out of the bondage of the Egyptians, to serve him and his commandments, that the children might see a cause to work of love likewise.

The seventh is altogether of faith: he removeth all occasions that might withdraw them from the faith, and pulleth them also from all confidence in themselves, and stirreth them up to trust in God boldly and only.

Of the eighth chapter thou seest how that the cause of temptation is, that a man might see his own heart. For when I am brought into that extremity, that I must either suffer or forsake God, then I shall feel how much I believe and trust in him, and how much I love him. In like manner if my brother do me evil for my good, then if I love him when there is no cause in him, I see that my love was of God, and even so if I then hate him, I feel and perceive that my love was but worldly, and finally he stirreth them to the faith and love of God, and driveth them from all confidence of their own selves.

In the ninth also he moveth them unto faith, and to put their trust in God, and draweth them from confidence of themselves, by rehearsing all the wickedness which they had wrought from the first day he knew them unto that same day. And in the end he repeateth how he conjured God in Horeb, and overcame him with prayer, where thou mayest learn the right manner to pray.

In the tenth he reckoneth up the pith of all laws, and the keeping of the law in the heart; which is to fear God, love him and serve him with all their heart, soul, and might, and keep his commandments of love. And he showed a reason why they should that do: even because God is Lord of heaven and earth, and hath also done all for them of his own goodness without their deserving. And then out of the love unto God, he bringeth the love unto a man's

neighbour, saying, God is Lord above all lords, and loveth all his servants indifferently, as well the poor and feeble, and the stranger, as the rich and mighty, and therefore willeth that we love the poor and the stranger. And he addeth a cause, For ye were strangers, and God delivered you, and hath brought you unto a land where ye be at home. Love the stranger therefore for his sake.

In the eleventh he exhorteth them to love and fear God, and rehearseth the terrible deeds of God upon his enemies, and on them that rebelled against him. And he testifieth unto them both what will follow, if they love and fear God, and what also if they despise him, and break his commandment.

In the twelfth he commandeth to put out of the way all that might be an occasion to hurt the faith, and forbiddeth to do ought after their own minds, or to alter the word of God.

In the thirteenth he forbiddeth to hearken unto ought save unto God's word: no, though he which counselleth contrary should come with miracles, as Paul doth unto the Galatians.

In the fourteenth the beasts are forbidden, partly for uncleanness of them, and partly to cause hate between the heathen and them, that they have no conversation together, in that one abhorreth what the other eateth. Unto this fifteenth chapter all pertain unto faith and love chiefly. And in this fifteenth, he beginneth to treat more specially of things pertaining unto the common wealth, and equity, and exhorteth unto the love of a man's neighbour. And in the sixteenth among other he forgetteth not the same. And in the seventeenth he treateth of right and equity chiefly, in so much that when he looketh unto faith and unto the punishment of idolaters, he yet endeth in a law of love and equity: forbidding to condemn any man under less than two witnesses at the least, and commandeth to bring the tresspasser unto the open gate of the city, where all men go in and out,

that all men might hear the cause and see that he had but right.

In the eighteenth he forbiddeth all false and devilish crafts that hurt true faith. Moreover because the people could not hear the voice of the law spoken to them in fire, he promiseth them another prophet, to bring them better tidings, which was spoken of Christ our Saviour.

The nineteenth, and so forth unto the end of the twenty-seventh, is almost altogether of love unto our neighbours; and of laws of equity and honesty, with now and then, a respect unto faith.

The twenty-eighth is a terrible chapter, and to be trembled at. A Christian man's heart might well bleed for sorrow at the reading of it; for fear of wrath that is like to come upon us, according to all the curses which thou there readest. For, according unto this curse hath God dealt with all nations, after they were fallen into the abominations of blindness.

The twenty-ninth is like terrible; with a godly lesson in the end, that we should leave searching of God's secrets, and give diligence to walk according to that he hath opened unto us. For the keeping of God's commandments teacheth wisdom, as thou mayest see in the same chapter, where Moses saith, Keep the commandments, that ye may understand what ye ought to do. But to search God's secrets, blindeth a man, as is well proved by the swarms of our sophisters, whose wise books are now when we look in the Scripture, found but full of foolishness.

THE END.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS
OF THE
REFORMERS AND FATHERS
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

No. II.

1. CRANMER'S PREFACE TO THE BIBLE.
2. THE SUM AND CONTENT OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.
3. THE FIRST HOMILY, OR A FRUITFUL EXHORTATION TO THE READING AND KNOWLEDGE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.



NEW EDITION,
Adapted to the Use of the Society.

LONDON:

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AND BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

SELECTIONS,

8c

PART I.

ON THE USE AND INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

FROM ARCHBISHOP CRANMER'S¹ PREFACE TO THE
GREAT BIBLE OF 1539.

For two sundry sorts of people, it seemeth much necessary that something be said in the entry of this book, by the way of a preface: whereby hereafter, it may be both the better accepted of them which hitherto could not well bear it, and also the better used of them which heretofore have misused it. In the former sort be all they that refuse to read, or to hear read, the Scripture in the vulgar tongue; much worse they that also² let, or discourage the other from the reading or hearing thereof. In the latter sort be they which, by their inordinate³ reading, indiscreet speaking, contentious disputing, or otherwise by their licentious living, slander and hinder most of all other men, the word of God whereof they would seem to be greatest furtherers. These two sorts, albeit they be

¹ Thomas Cranmer, the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, suffered martyrdom by fire, at Oxford, in 1556.

² Hinder.

³ Disorderly.

most far unlike the one to the other, yet they both deserve in effect like reproach. Neither can I well tell whether of them I may judge the more offender, him that doth obstinately refuse so godly and goodly knowledge, or him that so ungodly and so ungodly doth abuse the same.

And as touching the former, I would marvel much, that any man should be so mad, as to refuse in darkness, light, in hunger, food. For the word of God is light: "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet.*" food: "*Man shall not live by bread alone.*" I would marvel, I say, at this, save that I consider, how much custom and usage may do. So that if there were a people, as some write, which never saw the sun, by reason that they be situated far toward the North Pole, and be enclosed and overshadowed with high mountains: it is credible and like enough, that if, by the power and will of God the mountains should sink down, and give place that the light of the sun might have entrance to them, at the first some of them would be offended therewith. And the old proverb affirmeth, that after tillage of corn was first found, many delighted more to feed of masts and acorns wherewith they had been accustomed, than to eat bread made of good corn. Such is the manner and custom, that it causeth us to bear all things well, and easily, wherewith we have been accustomed, and to be offended with all things thereunto contrary. And therefore I can well think them worthy of pardon, which at the coming abroad of Scripture doubted and drew back. But such as will persist still in their wilfulness, I must needs judge not only foolish, froward, and obstinate, but also peevish, perverse, and indurate.

And yet, if the matter should be tried by custom, we might also allege custom for the reading of the Scripture in the vulgar tongue, and prescribe the more ancient custom. For it is not much above one hundred years ago, since Scripture was accustomed to be read in the vulgar tongue within this

realm: and many hundred years before that, it was translated and read in the Saxons' tongue, which at that time was our mother's tongue; whereof there remaineth yet divers copies, found lately in old abbeyes of such antique manners of writing and speaking, that few men now are able to read and understand them. And when this language waxed old and out of common usage, in order that folk should not lack the fruit of reading, it was again translated into the newer language, whereof yet also many copies remain, and be daily found.

But now to let pass custom, and to weigh, as wise men ever should, the thing in its own nature, let us here discuss, what it availeth for Scripture to be had and read of the lay and vulgar people. And to this question I intend here to say nothing but that was spoken and written by the noble doctor and most moral divine St. John Chrysostom, in his third sermon *On Lazarus*: albeit I will be something shorter, and gather the matter into fewer words and less room than he doth there, because I would not be tedious. He exhorted there his audience, that every man should read by himself at home in the mean days, and time between sermon and sermon, to the intent they might both more profoundly fix in their minds and memories what he had said before upon such texts, whereupon he had already preached: and also that they might have their minds the more ready and better prepared to receive and perceive that which he should say from thenceforth in his sermons, upon such texts as he had not yet declared and preached upon; therefore sayeth he there, "My common usage is to give you warning before, what matter I intend after to entreat upon, that you yourselves, in the mean days, may take the book in hand, read, weigh, and perceive the sum and effect of the matter, and mark what hath been declared, and what remaineth yet to be declared: so that thereby your mind may be the more furnished to hear the rest that shall be said. And

this I exhort you," saith he, "and ever have and will exhort you, that you not only here in the Church give ear to that which is said by the preacher ; but that also, when ye be at home in your houses, ye apply yourselves, from time to time, to the reading of Holy Scripture. Which thing also I never lynne¹ to beat into the ears of them that be my familiars, and with whom I have private acquaintance and conversation. Let no man make excuse and say, 'I am busied about matters of the commonwealth;' 'I bear this office or that;' 'I am a craftsman, I must apply mine occupation;' 'I have a wife, my children must be fed, my household must I provide for:' briefly, 'I am a man of the world, it is not for me to read the Scriptures; that belongeth to them that hath bidden the world farewell, which live in solitariness and contemplation, and have been brought up and continually nosylled² in learning and religion.' "

To this he saith, "What sayest thou, man? Is it not for thee to study and to read the Scripture, because thou art encumbered and distract with cares and business? So much the more it is behoveful for thee to have defence of Scriptures, how much thou art the more distressed in worldly dangers. They that be free, and far from trouble and intermeddling of worldly things, live in safeguard and tranquillity and in the calm, or within a sure haven. Thou art in the midst of the sea of worldly wickedness, and therefore thou needest the more of ghostly succour and comfort. They sit far from the strokes of battle, and far out of gun-shot, and therefore they be but seldom wounded. Thou that standest in the forefront of the host and nighest to thine enemies, must needs take now and then many strokes and be grievously wounded, and therefore thou hast more need to have thy remedies and medicines at hand. Thy wife provoketh thee to anger; thy child giveth

¹ Cease.² Nourished.

occasion to take sorrow and pensiveness; thine enemies lie in wait for thee; thy friend as thou takest him, sometime envieth thee; thy neighbour misreporteth thee, or picketh quarrels against thee; thy mate or partner undermineth thee; thy lord judge, or justice threateneth thee; poverty is painful unto thee; the loss of thy dear and well-beloved causeth thee to mourn; prosperity exalteth thee; adversity bringeth thee low; briefly, so divers and so manifold occasions of cares, tribulations, and temptations beset thee and besiege thee round about. Where canst thou have armour or fortress against thine assaults? Where canst thou have salves for thy sores, but of Holy Scripture? Thy flesh must needs be prone and subject to fleshly lusts, except thou hast in a readiness wherewith to suppress and avoid them, which cannot elsewhere be had but only out of the Holy Scriptures. Let us read, and seek all remedies that we can, and all shall be little enough. How shall we then do, if we suffer and take daily wounds, and when we have done, will sit still and search for no medicines? Dost thou not mark and consider how the smith, mason, or carpenter, or any other handy craftsman, what need soever he be in, what other shift soever he make, he will not sell nor pledge the tools of his occupation? For then how should he work his feat, or get his living thereby? (Of like mind and affection ought we to be towards Holy Scripture. For as mallets, hammers, saws, chisels, axes, and hatchets, be the tools of their occupation, so be the books of the prophets and apostles, and all holy Writ inspired by the Holy Ghost, the instruments of our salvation. Wherefore let us not stick to buy and provide us the Bible, that is to say, the books of Holy Scripture; and let us think that to be a better jewel in our house than either gold or silver. And they that occupy them be in much safeguard, and have a great consolation, and are the readier unto all goodness, the slower to all evil. And if they have done any thing

amiss, anon, even by the sight of the books, their consciences be admonished, and they wax sorry and ashamed of the fact.

“Peradventure they will say unto me, How and if we understand not what we read which is contained in the books? What then? Suppose thou understand not the deep and profound mysteries of Scripture, yet it cannot be, but that much fruit and holiness must come and grow unto thee by the reading. For it cannot be that thou shouldest be ignorant in all things alike. For the Holy Ghost hath so ordered and attempered the Scriptures, that in them, as well publicans, fishers, and shepherds may find their edification, as great doctors their erudition. For those books were not made to vain-glory, like as were the writings of the Gentile philosophers and rhetoricians, to the intent the makers should be had in admiration for their high styles, and obscure manner and writing; whereof nothing can be understood without a master or an expositor: but the apostles and prophets wrote their books so, that their special intent and purpose might be understood and perceived of every reader; which was nothing but the edification or amendment of the life of them that read or hear it. Who is it, that reading or hearing read in the Gospel, *Blessed are the meek*; *Blessed are the merciful*; *Blessed are the pure in heart*, and such other like places, can perceive nothing, except he have a master to teach him what it meaneth? Likewise the signs and miracles, with all other histories of the doings of Christ or his apostles, who is there of so simple wit and capacity but he may be able to perceive and understand them? These be but excuses and cloaks for their own idle slothfulness. ‘I cannot understand it.’ What marvel? How shouldest thou understand, if thou wilt not read nor look upon it? Take the books into thine hands, read the whole, and what thou understandest, keep it well in memory; what thou understandest not, read it again

and again. If thou can neither so come by it, counsel with some other that is better learned. Go to thy curate and preacher, show thyself desirous to know and learn. And I doubt not but God, seeing thy diligence and readiness, if no man teach thee, will himself vouchsafe with his Holy Spirit to illuminate thee, and to open unto thee that which was locked from thee.

“Remember the eunuch of Candace, queen of Ethiopia; who, albeit he was a man of a wild and barbarous country, and one occupied with worldly cares and businesses, yet riding in his chariot he was reading the Scripture. Now, consider, if this man passing in his journey was so diligent as to read the Scripture, what thinkest thou was he wont to do sitting at home? Again, he that letteth¹ not to read, albeit he did not understand, what did he then, trowest thou, after that, when he had learned and gotten understanding? For that thou mayest well know that he understood not what he read, hearken what Philip there sayeth unto him: *Understandest thou what thou readest?* And he, nothing ashamed to confess his ignorance, answereth, *How can I except some man should guide me?* Lo! when he lacked one to show him the way, and to expound to him the Scriptures, yet did he read. And therefore God the rather provided for him a guide of the way, and taught him to understand it. God perceived his willing and toward mind, and therefore he sent him a teacher by and by. Therefore let no man be negligent about his own health and salvation. Though thou have not Philip always when thou wouldest, the Holy Ghost, which then moved and stirred up Philip, will be ready and not fail thee, if thou do thy diligence accordingly. All these things be written unto us, for our edification and amendment, which be born towards the latter

¹ Ceaseth.

end of the world. The reading of Scripture is a great and strong bulwark or fortress against sin; the ignorance of the same is the greater ruin and destruction of them that will not know it. That is the thing that bringeth in heresy; that is it that causeth all corrupt and perverse living; that is it that bringeth all things out of good order."

Hitherto all that I have said I have taken and gathered out of the aforesaid sermon of this holy doctor, St. John Chrysostom. Now if I should in like manner bring forth what the self-same doctor speaketh in other places, and what other doctors and writers say concerning the same purpose, I might seem to you to write another Bible, rather than to make a preface to the Bible. Wherefore in few words to comprehend the largeness and the utility of the Scripture, how it containeth fruitful instruction and erudition for every man; if any thing be necessary to be learned, of the Holy Scripture we may learn it; if falsehood be to be reprov'd, thereof we may gather wherewithal: if any thing be to be corrected and amended, if there need any exhortation or consolation, of the Scripture we may well learn. In the Scriptures be the fat portion of the soul; therein is no venomous meat, no unwholesome thing: they be the very dainty and pure feeding. He that is ignorant shall find there what he should learn. He that is a perverse sinner shall there find his condemnation, to make him to tremble for fear. He that laboureth to serve God shall find there his glory, and the promises of eternal life, exhorting him more diligently to labour. Herein may princes learn how to govern their subjects: subjects, obedience, love, and dread to their princes: husbands, how they should behave them unto their wives, how to educate their children and servants; and contrary, the wives, children and servants may know their duty to their husbands, parents, and masters. Here may all manner of persons, men, women, young, old, learned, unlearned, rich,

poor, priests, laymen, lords, ladies, officers, tenants, and mean men, virgins, wives, widows, lawyers, merchants, artificers, husbandmen, and all manner of persons of what estate or condition soever they be, may in this book learn all things what they ought to believe, what they ought to do, and what they should not do, as well concerning Almighty God, as also concerning themselves and all other. Briefly, to the reading of the Scripture none can be enemy, but that either be so sick, that they love not to hear of any medicine; or else that be so ignorant, that they know not Scripture to be the most healthful medicine.

Therefore as touching this former part, I will here conclude, and take it as a conclusion sufficiently determined, that it is convenient and good for the Scripture to be read of all sorts and kinds of people, and in the vulgar tongue, without further allegations and probations for the same; which shall not need, since that this one place of John Chrysostom is enough and sufficient to persuade all of them that be not frowardly and perversely set in their own wilful opinion.

Therefore now to come to the second and latter part of my purpose. Here is nothing so good in this world but it may be abused, and turned from fruitful and wholesome to hurtful and noisome. What is there above, better than the sun, the moon, the stars? Yet were there that took occasion, by the great beauty and virtue of them, to dishonour God, and to defile themselves with idolatry, giving the honour of the living God and Creator of all things, to such things as he had created. What is there here beneath, better than fire, water, meats, drinks, metals of gold, silver, iron, and steel? Yet we see daily great harm and much mischief done by every one of these, as well for lack of wisdom and providence of them that suffer evil, as by the malice of them that work the evil. Thus to them that be evil of themselves, every

thing setteth forward and increaseth their evil, be it of his own nature a thing never so good. Like as, contrarily, to them that study and endeavour themselves to goodness, every thing profiteth unto good, be it of its own nature a thing never so bad. As St. Paul saith, *All things work together for good to them that love God.* Wherefore I would advise you all that come to the reading or hearing of this book which is the word of God, the most precious jewel and most holy relic that remaineth upon earth, that ye bring with you the fear of God, and that ye do it with all reverence, and use your knowledge thereof, not to vain-glory of frivolous disputation, but to the honour of God, increase of virtue, and edification both of yourselves and others.

Therefore to conclude this latter part, Every man that cometh to the reading of this holy book ought to bring with him, first and foremost, the fear of Almighty God; and then next, a firm and stable purpose to reform his own self according thereunto; and so to continue, proceed, and prosper, from time to time, showing himself to be a sober, and fruitful hearer and learner. Which if he do, he shall prove, at length, well able to teach, though not with his mouth, yet with his living and good example; which is, sure, the most lively and effectual form and manner of teaching. He that otherwise intermeddloeth with this book, let him be assured that he shall one day give account thereof; when he shall have said to him, as it is written in the prophet David, "*What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.*" "*Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.*" Psalm l. 16, 17. 23.

THE SUM AND CONTENT OF ALL THE HOLY SCRIPTURE, BOTH OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

As prefixed to many of the principal Translations of the Holy Bible, published in the Reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. namely, Matthew's, A.D. 1537: Cranmer's, or the Great Bible, A.D. 1539: Taverner's, A.D. 1539: Becke's, A.D. 1549.

FIRST, the holy writings of the Bible teach us, that there is one God Almighty, that hath neither beginning nor ending: which of his own goodness did create all things; of whom all things proceed, and without whom there is nothing; which is righteous and merciful, and which worketh all things in all, after his will; of whom it may not be demanded, wherefore he doth this, or that.

Then, that this very God did create Adam, the first man, after his own image and similitude, and did ordain and appoint him lord of all the creatures in the earth. Which Adam, by the envy of the devil, disobeying the commandment of his Maker, did first sin, and brought sin into this world, such and so great, that we, which are sprung of him after the flesh, are subdued unto sin, death, and damnation, brought under the yoke and tyranny of the devil.

And further, that Christ Jesus, his Son, was promised of God the Father to be a Saviour to this Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and the other fathers; which should deliver from their sins and from the tyranny of the devil, them who with a quick and living faith would believe this promise, and trust to this Jesus Christ, hoping to have this deliverance of and by him. And truly, this promise is very oft rehearsed in the books of the Old Testament; as that is called the New, which teacheth that this promise is fulfilled.

And, that in the mean season (while the fathers were looking for the salvation and deliverance promised) because man's nature is such that he not only cannot but also will not confess himself to be a sinner, and especially such a sinner as hath need of the saving health promised, the law was given, for this among other purposes, that men might thereby know sin, and that they are sinners: when they see that they do none of the things that the law commandeth, with so glad and willing a mind as God requireth; but rather against their wills, without affection, and as though they were constrained with the fear of that hell which the law threateneth, saying, "*Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.*" And that this law was given to the intent that, sin and the malice of men's hearts being thereby the better known, men should the more fervently thirst for the coming of Christ, which should redeem them from their sins: as it was figured unto the Jews by many ceremonies, hosts, and sacrifices, which were ordained of God, not to the intent to take away sins, but to show and declare, that they should be put away by faith in the salvation promised through Christ; and which now are put away by the coming of that Christ, which is the very Lamb of God that taketh away all sins.

Last of all, by the books of the New Testament, we are taught that Christ, who was promised and shadowed in the Old Testament, is sent of the Father, at such time as he had determined with himself. And that he was sent, not for any man's good works (for they all were sinners), but to the intent that he would truly show the abundant riches of his grace, which he had promised.

In the New Testament, therefore, it is most evidently declared, that Jesus Christ, the true Lamb and Host, is come, to the intent to reconcile us to the Father, paying on the cross the punishment due

unto our sins: and to deliver us from the bondage of the devil unto whom we served through sin, and to make us the sons of God, since he hath given us the true peace and tranquillity of conscience, that we no longer do feel the pains of hell: which fear is put away by the faith, confidence, and assurance that the Father giveth us, drawing us unto his Son. For that faith is the gift of God, whereby we believe that Christ is come into this world to save sinners; which is of so great pith, that they which have it desire to perform all the duties of love to all men, after the example of Christ. For faith once received, God giveth his Holy Ghost, wherewith he tokeneth and marketh all that believe: and which giveth witness unto our spirit, that we be the sons of God; pouring therewith the love into our hearts, which Paul describeth and setteth out to the Corinthians. By that faith and confidence in Christ, which by love is mighty in operation, and which showeth itself through the works of love, stirring men thereto; by that, I say, we are justified; that is, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is become our's also, through Christ our brother, and counteth us for righteousness, and for his sons: imputing not our sins unto us, through his grace.

To conclude, He came to the intent, that we, being cleansed from our sins, and sanctified unto God the Father; that is, hallowed unto the use of the Father, to exercise good works, denying and forsaking the works of the flesh, should freely serve him in righteousness and holiness all our life long; through good works, which God hath ordained, that we should walk in them, declaring ourselves thereby to be surely called unto this grace; which works, whosoever hath not, declareth that he hath not faith in Christ.

Unto whom we must come, and follow him with a cheerful heart, that he may instruct and teach us: for he is our Master, meek and humble of heart; he

is our Example, of whom we must learn the rule of good living: further, he is our Priest, high Bishop, and only Mediator; which now sitteth on the right hand of God the Father, is our Advocate, and prayeth ever for us; which will undoubtedly obtain whatsoever we desire, either of him, or of his Father in his name; if we believe that he will do it when we require it, for so hath he promised. Let us therefore not doubt, although we sometimes sin, with confidence to come unto him, and with a living and undoubting faith, that we shall obtain mercy. For therefore came he to the intent to save sinners: neither requireth he any thing more of us, than to come unto him without fear.

This is that Christ Jesus, which after he hath killed the man of sin with the breath of his mouth, shall sit in his Majesty, and judge all men, giving unto every one the works of his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad; and that he shall say unto them that shall be on his right hand, *"Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;"* and unto them that shall be on his left hand, *"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."* Then shall the end come, and he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, the Father.

To the intent that we should know this, by the goodness of God working by his Holy Spirit, are the holy writings of the Bible given us; that we should know, I say, and believe that there is one God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent: and that in believing, we should have everlasting life through his name.

Other foundation than this can no man lay. And St. Paul desireth that he be holden accursed, which preacheth any other faith and salvation, than only by Jesus Christ: yea, although, "we or an angel of heaven."

For of him, and through him, and for him are all things: to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory for evermore. Amen.

THE FIRST HOMILY,

Or a fruitful Exhortation to the Reading and Knowledge of holy Scripture.

UNTO Christian man there can be nothing either more necessary or profitable than the knowledge of Holy Scripture, forasmuch as in it is contained God's true word, setting forth his glory, and all man's duty. And there is no truth nor doctrine necessary for our justification and everlasting salvation, that is or may be drawn out of that fountain and well of truth. Therefore as many as be desirous to enter into the right and perfect way unto God, must apply their minds to know Holy Scripture: without the which they can neither sufficiently know God and his will, neither their office and duty. And as drink is pleasant to them that be dry, and meat to them that be hungry, so is the reading, hearing, searching, and studying of Holy Scripture to them that be desirous to know God, or themselves, and to do his will. And their stomachs only do loathe and abhor the heavenly knowledge and food of God's word, that be so drowned in worldly vanities, that they neither savour God, nor any godliness; for that is the cause why they desire such vanities, rather than the true knowledge of

The praise of holy Scripture.

The perfection of holy Scripture.

The knowledge of holy Scripture is necessary.

To whom the knowledge of holy Scripture is sweet and pleasant.

Who be enemies to holy Scripture.

An apt similitude, declaring of whom the Scripture is abhorred.

God. As they that are sick of an ague, whatsoever they eat and drink, though it be never so pleasant, yet it is as bitter to them as wormwood; not for the bitterness of their meat, but for the corrupt

and bitter humour that is in their own tongue and mouth: even so is the sweetness of God's word bitter not of itself, but only unto them that have their minds corrupted with long custom of sin and love of this world. Therefore, forsaking the corrupt judgment of fleshly men, which care not but for their carcase; let us reverently hear and read Holy

An exhortation unto the diligent reading and searching of the Holy Scripture.

Scripture, which is the food of the soul. Let us diligently search for the well of life in the books of the New and Old Testament, and not run to the stinking puddles of men's traditions, devised by men's imaginations, for our justification and salvation. For in Holy Scripture is fully

contained what we ought to do, and what to eschew, what to believe, what to love, and what to look for at God's hands at length. *Math. iv.* In these

books we shall find the Father from whom, the Son by whom, and the Holy Ghost in whom, all things have their being and keeping up, and these three persons to be but one God, and one substance. In

these books we may learn to know ourselves how vile and miserable we be, and also to know God, how good he is of himself, and how he maketh us and all creatures

partakers of his goodness. We may learn also in these books to know God's will and pleasure, as much as, for this present time, is convenient for us to know. And, as the great clerk and godly preacher, St. John Chrysostom, saith, Whatsoever is required to the salvation of man is fully contained in the Scripture of God. He that is ignorant may there learn and have knowledge. He

that is hard-hearted and an obstinate sinner, shall there find everlasting torments prepared of God's justice, to make him afraid, and to mollify or soften him. He that is oppressed with misery in this world shall there find relief in the promises of everlasting life, to his great consolation and comfort. He that is wounded by the devil unto death shall find there medicine whereby he may be restored again unto health; if it shall require to teach any truth, or reprove any false doctrine, to rebuke any vice, to commend any virtue, to give good counsel, to comfort or to exhort, or to do any other thing requisite for our salvation, all those things, saith St. Chrysostom, we may learn plentifully of the Scripture. There is, saith Fulgentius, abundantly enough, both for men to eat, and children to suck.

There is whatsoever is meet for all ages, and for all degrees and sorts of men. These books therefore ought to be much in our hands, in our eyes, in our ears, in our mouths, but most of all

Holy Scripture
ministereth sufficient doctrine
for all degrees
and ages.

in our hearts. For the Scripture of God is the heavenly meat of our souls; the hearing and keeping of it maketh us blessed, sanctifieth us, and maketh us holy; it turneth our souls; it is a light lantern to our feet. *Matt. iv. Luke iv. John xvii.*

Psaln xix. It is a sure, steadfast and everlasting instrument of salvation; it giveth wisdom to the humble and lowly hearts; it comforteth, maketh glad, checreth, and cherisheth our conscience; it is a more excellent jewel or treasure than

any gold or precious stone; it is more sweet than honey or honey-comb; it is called the *better part*, which Mary did choose, for it hath in it everlasting com-

What commodities and profits
the knowledge
of *Holy Scripture*
bringeth.

fort. *Luke x. John vi.* The words of Holy Scriptures be called words of *everlasting life*: for they be God's instrument, ordained for the same purpose. They have power to turn through God's promise,

and they be effectual through God's assistance, and (being received in a faithful heart) they have ever an heavenly spiritual working in them; they are lively, quick, and mighty in operation, and *sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow.* Heb. iv. Christ calleth him a wise builder, that buildeth upon his word, upon his sure and substantial foundation. *Matt. vii.* By this word of God we shall be judged: for *the word that I have spoken, saith Christ, the same shall judge in the last day.* John xii. He that keepeth the word of Christ is promised the love and favour of God, and that he shall be the dwelling-place or temple of the blessed Trinity. *John xiv.* This word who-soever is diligent to read, and in his heart to print that he readeth, the great affection to the transitory things of this world shall be minished in him, and the great desire of heavenly things (that be therein promised of God) shall increase in him. And there is nothing that so much strengtheneth our faith and trust in God, that so much keepeth up innocency and pureness of the heart, and also of outward godly life and conversation, as continual reading and recording of God's word. For that thing which (by continual use of reading of Holy Scripture, and diligent searching of the same) is deeply printed and graven in the heart, at length turneth almost into nature. And moreover, the effect and virtue of God's word is to illuminate the ignorant, and to give more light unto them that faithfully and diligently read it, to comfort their hearts, and to encourage them to perform that, which of God is commanded. It teacheth patience in all adversity, in prosperity humbleness; what honour is due unto God, what mercy and clarity to our neighbour. *1 Kings xiv. 2 Chron. xx. 1 Cor. xv. 1 John v.* It giveth good counsel in all doubtful things. It sheweth of whom we shall look for aid and help in all perils, and that

God is the only giver of victory in all battles and temptations of our enemies, bodily and ghostly. And in reading of God's word, he most profiteth, not always that is most ready in turning of the book, or in saying of it

Who profit most in reading God's word.

without the book; but he that is most turned unto it, that is most inspired with the holy Ghost, most in his heart and life altered and changed into that thing which he readeth; he that is daily less and less proud, less wrathful, less covetous, and less desirous of worldly and vain pleasures; he that daily (forsaking his old vicious life) increaseth in virtue more and more. And, to be short, there is nothing that more maintaineth godliness of the mind, and driveth away ungodliness, than doth the continual reading or hearing of God's word, if it be joined with a godly mind, and a good affection to know and follow God's will. *Isaiah v. Matt. xxii. 1 Cor. xiv.* For without a single eye, pure intent, and good mind, nothing is allowed for good before God. And on the other side, nothing more darkeneth Christ and the glory of God, nor bringeth in more blindness and all kinds of vices, than doth the ignorance of God's word.

What incommo-
dities the igno-
rance of God's
word bringeth.

The Second Part of the Sermon of the Knowledge of Holy Scripture.

IN the first part of this Sermon, which exhorteth to the knowledge of Holy Scripture, was declared wherefore the knowledge of the same is necessary and profitable to all men, and that by the true knowledge and understanding of Scripture, the most necessary points of our duty towards God and our neighbours are also known. Now, as concerning the same matter, you shall hear what followeth. If we profess Christ, why be we not

ashamed to be ignorant in his doctrine? seeing that every man is ashamed to be ignorant in that learning which he professeth. That man is ashamed to be called a philosopher which readeth not the books of philosophy, and to be called a lawyer, an astronomer, or a physician, that is ignorant in the works of law, astronomy, and physic. How can any man then say that he professeth Christ and his religion, if he will not apply himself (as far forth as he can or may conveniently) to read and hear, and so to know the books of Christ's Gospel and doctrine? Although

God's word excelleth all sciences. other sciences be good, and to be learned, yet no man can deny but this is the chief, and passeth all other incomparably.

What excuse shall we therefore make, at the last day before Christ, that delight to read or hear men's fantasies and inventions more than his most holy Gospel? And will find no time to do that which chiefly, above all things we should do, and will rather read other things than that, for the which we ought rather to leave reading of all other things. Let us therefore apply ourselves, as far forth as we can have time and leisure, to know God's word, by diligent hearing and reading thereof, as many as profess God, and have faith and trust in

Vain excuses dissuading from the knowledge of God's word. him. But they that have no good affection to God's word (to colour this their fault) allege commonly two vain and feigned excuses. Some go about

The first. to excuse them by their own frailness and fearfulness, saying that they dare not read Holy Scripture, lest through their ignorance they fall into any error. Others pretend that the

The second. difficulty to understand it and the hardness thereof is so great, that it is meet to be read only by clerks and learned men. As touching the first: Ignorance of God's word, is the cause of all error, as Christ himself affirmed to the Sadducces, saying, *Ye do err, not knowing the*

Scriptures. *Matt.* xxii. How should they then eschew error, that will be still ignorant? And how should they come out of ignorance, that will not read nor hear that thing which should give them knowledge? He that now hath most knowledge, was at the first ignorant; yet he forbore not to read, for fear he should fall into error; but he diligently read, lest he should remain in ignorance, and through ignorance in error. And if you will not know the truth of God (a thing most necessary for you) lest you fall into error; by the same reason you may then lie still, and never go, lest, if you go, you fall into the mire: nor eat any good meat, lest you take a surfeit: nor sow your corn, nor labour in your occupation, nor use your merchandise, for fear you lose your seed, your labour, your stock; and so by that reason it should be best for you to live idly, and never to take in hand to do any manner of good thing, lest peradventure some evil thing may chance thereof. And if you be afraid to fall into error by reading the Holy Scripture, I shall show you how you may read without danger of error. Read it humbly with a meek and a lowly heart, to the intent you may glorify God, and not yourself, with the knowledge of it: and read it not without daily praying to God, that he would direct your reading to good effect; and take upon you to expound it no further than you can plainly understand it. For, as St. Augustine saith, the knowledge of Holy Scripture is a great, large, and high place; but the door is very low, so that the high and arrogant man cannot run in but he must stoop low and humble himself, that shall enter into it. Presumption and arrogancy are the mother of all error; and humility needeth to fear no error. For humility will only search to know the truth; it will search, and will bring together one place with another, and where it cannot find out the meaning, it will pray, it will ask of

How most com-
modiously and
without all peril
the holy Scrip-
ture is to be
read.

others that know, and will not presumptuously and rashly define any thing which it knoweth not. Therefore the humble man may search any truth boldly in the Scripture, without any danger of error. And if he be ignorant he ought the more to read and to search Holy Scripture, to bring him out of ignorance. I say not nay, but a man may profit with only hearing: but he may much more profit with both hearing and reading. This have I said as touching the fear to read through ignorance of

the person. And concerning the hardness of Scripture; he that is so weak that he is not able to brook strong meat, yet he may suck the sweet and tender milk, and defer the rest until he

wax stronger, and come to more knowledge. For God receiveth the learned and unlearned, and casteth away none, but is indifferent unto all. And the Scripture is full, as well of low valleys, plain ways, and easy for every man to use and to walk in; as also of high hills and mountains, which few men

can climb unto. And whosoever giveth his mind to Holy Scriptures with diligent study and burning desire, it cannot be, saith St. John Chrysostom, that he should be left without help. For

either God Almighty will send him some godly doctor to teach him, as he did to instruct the eunuch, a nobleman of Ethiopia, and treasurer unto Queen Candace, who having a great affection to read the Scripture, (although he understood it not,) yet for the desire that he had unto God's word, God sent his Apostle Philip to declare unto him the true sense of the Scripture that he read; or else, if we lack a learned man to instruct and teach us, yet God himself from above will give light unto our minds and teach us those things which are necessary for us, and wherein we be ignorant. And

in another place Chrysostom saith, that
 How the know-
 ledge of the man's human and worldly wisdom or

science is not needful to the understanding of Scripture, but the revelation of the Holy Ghost, who inspireth the true meaning into them, that with humility and diligence do search therefore. *For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.* Matt. vii. If we read once, twice, or thrice, and understand not, let us not cease so, but still continue reading, praying, asking of others, and so by still knocking, at the last, the door shall be opened; as St. Augustine saith. Although many things in Scripture be spoken in obscure mysteries, yet there is nothing spoken under dark mysteries in one place, but the self-same thing in other places is spoken more familiarly and plainly to the capacity both of learned and unlearned. And those things in the Scripture that be plain to understand, and necessary for salvation, every man's duty is to learn them, to print them in memory, and effectually to exercise them. And as for the dark mysteries, to be contented to be ignorant in them, until such time as it shall please God to open those things unto him. In the mean season, if he lack either aptness or opportunity God will not impute it to his folly: but yet it becometh not, that such as be apt should set aside reading, because some other be unapt to read; nevertheless, for the hardness of such places, the reading of the whole ought not to be set apart. And briefly to conclude, as St. Augustine saith, by the Scripture all men be amended, weak men be strengthened, and strong men be comforted. So that surely none be enemies to the reading of God's word, but such as either be so ignorant, that they know not how wholesome a thing it is; or else be so sick, that they hate the most comfortable medi-

Scripture may be attained unto.

A good rule for the understanding of Scripture.

No man is excepted from the knowledge of God's word.

What persons would have ignorance to continue.

cine that should heal them; or so ungodly, that they would wish the people still to continue in blindness and ignorance of God.

The Holy Scripture is one of God's chief benefits.

Thus we have briefly touched some part of the commodities of God's holy word, which is one of God's chief and principal benefits, given and declared to mankind here on earth. Let us thank God heartily for this great and special gift, beneficial favour, and fatherly providence; let us be glad to receive this precious gift of our heavenly Father;

The right reading, use, and fruitful studying of Holy Scripture.

let us hear, read, and know these holy rules, injunctions, and statutes of our Christian religion, and upon that we have made profession to God at our baptism; let us with fear and reverence lay up in the chest of our hearts these necessary and fruitful lessons; let us night and day muse and have meditation and contemplation in them. *Psalm i.* Let us ruminate, and as it were chew the cud, that we may have the sweet juice, spiritual effect, marrow, honey, kernel, taste, comfort, and consolation of them: let us stay, quiet, and certify our consciences, with the most infallible certainty, truth, and perpetual assurance of them: let us pray to God (the only Author of those heavenly studies) that we may speak, think, believe, live, and depart hence, according to the wholesome doctrine and verities of them. And by that means in this world we shall have God's defence, favour, and grace, with the unspeakable solace of peace, and quietness of conscience: and after this miserable life, we shall enjoy the endless bliss and glory of heaven: which He grant us all that died for us all, Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, both now and everlasting. *Amen.*

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FACTS AND ASSERTIONS :
OR,
A BRIEF AND PLAIN EXHIBITION
OF THE
INCONGRUITY OF THE PECULIAR DOCTRINES
OF THE
Church of Rome
WITH THOSE
LOIN OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES AND OF THE EARLY
WRITERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH CATHOLIC.

—
BY
GEORGE STANLEY FABER, B.D.
MASTER OF HERBURN HOSPITAL, AND PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY.

It is the part of mere triflers to propound and to speak the things which are not
written — *Athanas Epist ad Serap* Oper vol ii p 29



NEW EDITION.
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ADVERTISEMENT.

It has been suggested to me; that *A brief and plain Exhibition of the utter Incongruity of the peculiar doctrines of the Church of Rome with those both of the Sacred Scriptures and of the early writers of the Christian Church Catholic*, might be useful as a small Tract for general circulation.

This suggestion has given rise to the present little manual. As for those, who either desire more copious information on the subject, or who may wish to see my authorities in the original Greek and Latin: I refer them to the second edition of my *Difficulties of Romanism*, printed for Messrs. Rivingtons, St. Paul's Church-yard, and Waterloo-Place, London, 1830.

If, from the Written Word of God and from the Fathers of the three first ages, any Latin Divine can make out an historical case, for *The alleged Apostolicity of the peculiarities of the Church of Rome*, better than the failures of Mr. Berington and Bishop Trevern of Strasbourg: let him by all means come forward, whether he be Bishop or Priest or Deacon. The Bible and the Fathers of the three first centuries, whence alone any historical substantiation of the assertions made by the Romish Clergy can be deduced, are open to them as well as to ourselves.

Respecting *opinions in the abstract*, ingenious men may dispute for ever : but **FACTS** are of a more stubborn and intractable quality.

Assertions of the apostolicity and perpetuity and immutability and primeval universality of Romish Peculiarities are cheaply made : but **FACTS** and **ASSERTIONS** are matters widely different from each other.

To the satisfactory test of **BARE FACTS** I have brought the peculiar doctrines and practices of Romanism.

Let the Latin Clergy, if it be in their power, set aside *my* **FACTS**, and historically substantiate *their own* **ASSERTIONS**.

*Long-Newton Rectory,
August 3, 1830.*

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FACTS AND ASSERTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

THE great and constant boast of the Latin Clergy is: that *The Catholic or Universal Church of Christ, from the very beginning, has ALWAYS taught the doctrines which are now taught by the Church of Rome; that These doctrines are revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures; and that They have ALWAYS been set forth and maintained by those early ecclesiastical writers who are commonly styled the Fathers.*

I. On these points, lest we should labour under any mistake, let us hear the positive declarations of the Council of Trent, which sat in the sixteenth century, and which by the Romanists is considered as having finally set at rest all disputes respecting the points of doctrine litigated between themselves and the Reformed¹.

¹ Such, avowedly, has been the language of Dr. Norris, of Stonyhurst: such also, unless my memory altogether fail me, has been the language of Dr. Doyle. *Roma locuta est Causa finita est.* Which, being interpreted, is *Rome hath spoken. the cause, therefore, is determined.*

These two divines seem, either themselves to have forgotten, or to have expected *their opponents* to forget; that the Theologians of Trent, not only define DOCTRINES, but assert FACTS; not only assert FACTS, but assert them as THE AVOWED BASIS OF DOCTRINES.

The defined DOCTRINES being thus *professedly* made to rest upon the asserted FACTS, we should feel ourselves greatly obliged to Dr. Norris, and Dr. Doyle, if they would distinctly teach us, *What becomes of the defined DOCTRINES, when the asserted FACTS themselves turn out to be mere shadowy non-entities?*

Will a house continue to stand, when its foundations are removed? Can doctrines remain secure, when their *professed* basis of facts proves to be nothing better than the fabric of a vision?

The declarations of that last reputed infallible General Council run in manner following.

1. This faith was ALWAYS in THE CHURCH OF GOD¹.

2. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH thus ALWAYS understood².

3. This matter was ALWAYS held for certain in THE CHURCH OF GOD³.

4. The SACRED SCRIPTURES declare and the tradition of THE CATHOLIC CHURCH has ALWAYS taught⁴.

5. Since, by the testimony of SCRIPTURE, by apostolical tradition, and by the unanimous consent of THE FATHERS, the matter is perspicuous:—no one ought to doubt⁵.

6. The Council of Trent, following the testimonies of THE SACRED SCRIPTURES and THE HOLY FATHERS, and the most esteemed Councils and the judgment and consent of the Church herself, determines, confesses, and declares, these doctrines⁶.

II. Here we have no ambiguity. The Church of Rome, we see, speaking through the organ of the Council of Trent, declares: that *Her doctrines are revealed in Holy Scripture; and that, Expressly as such, they have always been unanimously taught by the Fathers, and have always been invariably received by the Church Universal*⁷.

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. XIII. c. 3 p. 124

² Ibid. sess. XIV. c. 5 p. 148

³ Ibid. sess. XIV. c. 7. p. 153.

⁴ Ibid. sess. XIII. c. 1 p. 99.

⁵ Ibid. sess. XIII. c. 3. p. 280.

⁶ Ibid. sess. V. p. 12, 13.

⁷ Here let the reader mark the circumstance, alluded to in a preceding note.

We have A DOCTRINAL SYSTEM professedly resting upon A BASIS OF ASSERTED FACTS.

The DOCTRINAL SYSTEM comprehends *all the peculiarities of Popery: the BASIS OF ASSERTED FACTS is the unanimous teaching of those peculiarities both by Holy Scripture and by the whole body of the Fathers.*

Now, if, simply as an historical matter of fact the peculiarities of Popery be not taught by Holy Scripture, and by the whole body of the Fathers, will Dr. Norris and Dr. Doyle have the goodness to tell us; how, on the declared principles of the Council of Trent, we are to estimate the value of those same peculiarities?

III. Now the meanest capacity will, at once perceive: that, *In making this declaration, the Church of Rome asserts, not merely a point of opinion, but AN ABSOLUTE MATTER OF FACT.*

The simple question, therefore, is: *Whether the asserted FACT be capable of substantiation by competent EVIDENCE.*

1. In submitting this matter to the plain and honest inquirer, it is obvious, that nothing more is necessary: than, first, to state any particular doctrine of the Roman Church; next, to bring forward either the silence or the declarations of Scripture; and, lastly, to adduce the testimony of the Fathers.

2. By the adoption of such a plan without a grain of any extraordinary learning, and by the mere exercise of common sense, every reader will be enabled fully to judge for himself.

3. Nor can a member even of the Roman Church justly refuse to hear me. For the present is simply A QUESTION OF FACT: and, by Mr. Berington, one of his own Clergy, he is distinctly assured; that *It is no article of Catholic Faith, that the Church cannot err in MATTERS OF FACT*¹. Under the express sanction, therefore, of Mr. Berington, the laic gentlemen of the Roman Church will, I hope, be persuaded to indulge me with their company.

CHAPTER II.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

I SHALL begin with subjecting, to the test proposed by the Council of Trent itself, the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

I. The following, as defined by the Council of Trent, is the doctrine of the Roman Church with respect to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

¹ Faith of Cathol. p. 154, 155.

1. In the sacrament of the Eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is, truly and really and substantially, contained, under the species of those sensible objects: so that, immediately after consecration, the true body and the true blood of our Lord, together with his soul and divinity, exist under the species of bread and wine: for by the very force of the words themselves, the blood exists under the species of the wine; and the body, under the species of the bread. But, furthermore, by virtue of that natural connexion and concomitance, through which the parts of the Lord, after his resurrection from the dead, are mutually joined together, the body exists under the species of the bread, the blood exists under the species of the wine, and the soul exists under the species both of the bread and the wine. The divinity, moreover, on account of its admirable hypostatic union with the body and the soul, similarly exists alike under each species. Wherefore, under each species and under both species, so much as even the whole is contained. For the entire Christ exists both under the species of bread, and under each particle of that species: and the entire Christ exists both under the species of wine, and under all the particles of that species. Hence, through the consecration of the bread and wine, there takes place a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of our Lord Christ, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood: which conversion is properly and conveniently denominated Transubstantiation.

2. All the faithful are bound to offer to the Eucharist that same adoration of Latria, which is paid to the Deity: for such adoration rests upon the belief, that in that sacrament there is substantially present the filial God, concerning whom, the Father pronounced; Let all the angels of God worship him. And, analogously, in point of beneficial efficacy, the Eucharist, being the identical sacrifice which Christ

offered upon the cross, must be deemed a true propitiatory sacrifice, making satisfaction each time that it is offered, not only for the living, but likewise for the dead in the Lord who have not as yet been fully purified¹.

II. Let us now hear Scripture with respect to this same holy sacrament.

1. *I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore, strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them: Verily, verily, I say unto you: Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He, that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him.—These sayings said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Many, therefore, of his disciples, when they had heard this, said: This is an hard saying: who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them: Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT QUICKENETH: THE FLESH PROFITETH NOTHING. THE WORDS, THAT I SPEAK UNTO YOU, ARE SPIRIT AND LIFE².*

When our Lord enforced the necessity of eating his flesh and of drinking his blood, the Jews, and even his disciples, understanding Him *literally* just as the Romish Clergy now expound his language, murmured at so hard a saying, and asked how He could possibly give men his flesh to eat. Whereupon Christ, in the

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. xiii. c. 1, 3, 4, 5. can. 1, 2, 3 4. p. 122, 123 124, 125, 126, 129 130. sess. xxii. c. 20. can. 1. 3. n. 230, 240, 244.

² John vi. 61—63.

avowed way of explanation, immediately declared : *that the words, which he spake, are spirit ; and that the flesh profiteth nothing.* Clearly, therefore, according to his own distinct explanation, his words are to be understood *spiritually or figuratively*, not *carnally or literally*.

2. *As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to his disciples, and said : 'Take, eat ; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying : Drink ye all of it ; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you : I will not drink henceforth of THIS FRUIT OF THE VINE, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom'.*

(1.) The authoritative interpretation of such language, as that which is here employed by our Lord, had already been given by Him at Capernaum. His words are to be understood *spiritually or figuratively* : just as when He declared himself to be a *vine* and his disciples to be *branches*¹.

Accordingly, even *after* consecration, when the Romish Clergy assert the wine to have been literally transubstantiated into the actual material blood of Christ ; He himself still calls it *this fruit of the vine* : an appellation, if we receive as scriptural truth the doctrine of Transubstantiation, *then* clearly false and erroneous and inaccurate.

(2.) We may note, that the Apostles expressed not the least surprise, or uttered the smallest murmur, on account of our Lord's phrasology, when He instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist.

The reason is obvious, though the fact is highly worth our special attention. They had heard and recollected his own explanation of the parallel language which He employed at Capernaum. Hence they *now*, as a matter of course, understood Him to

¹ Matt. xxvi. 26—29.

² Thus formally interpret: Theodoret. See below § III. 9. (1.)

speak *figuratively*, not *literally*: and hence, what was the natural result, his words now gave them no offence.

3. *I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you: That the Lord Jesus, the night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and, when he had given thanks, he brake and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, the cup, when he had supped, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink, in remembrance of me. For, as often as ye eat THIS BREAD and drink THIS CUP, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat THIS BREAD and drink THIS CUP of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself: And so let him eat of THE BREAD, and drink of THE CUP*¹.

(1.) The language of St. Paul exactly corresponds with the language of Christ.

Even after consecration, the Apostle, we may observe, still repeatedly calls the elements *this bread* and *this cup*, or *the bread* and *the cup*. Yet he could not truly have thus called them: if, all the while, they had become, by transubstantiation, literal human flesh and literal human blood.

(2.) We may here again note, that the *true* doctrine of the Eucharist, as undoubtedly delivered by St. Paul to the gentile converts of Corinth, does not appear to have excited either surprise or offence.

Whence the presumption, or rather indeed the certainty, is: that, in delivering it to them, he distinctly taught, on the authority of his Lord and Master, that *it is the spirit which quickeneth, that the flesh profiteth nothing, and that the words spoken by Christ are spirit and life.*

4. As our Saviour thus fully explains his own

¹ 1 Corinth. xi. 23—28.

phraseology : so, in strict congruity with his explanation; on the existence of the soul and divinity of Christ in the consecrated elements, and on the adoration of those elements with the very same adoration as that which is paid to the Deity, Holy Scripture is PROFOUNDLY SILENT.

From whatever quarter the duty of such worship was learned by the Romish Priesthood, it assuredly was *not* learned from the Bible. The written word of God neither enjoins it, nor gives a single instance of its ever having been paid either in the time or with the sanction of the Apostles.

5. EQUALLY SILENT also is the Bible, respecting the alleged circumstance : that *The celebration of the Eucharist is a true propitiatory sacrifice both for the quick and for the dead.*

The Church of Rome, indeed, teaches this doctrine : but she did *not* learn it from Scripture.

III. We may now, with advantage, proceed to hear the declarations of the Fathers concerning the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

1. Clement of Alexandria lived in the second century.

(1.) The Scripture has named wine A MYSTIC SYMBOL of the holy blood¹.

(2.) Know well, that the Lord himself also partook of WINE : for He himself also was a man. And He blessed the wine, saying : *Take, drink; this is my blood, the blood of the vine.* The holy stream of exhilaration ALLEGORICALLY REPRESENTS the Word, who poured himself out on behalf of many, for the remission of sins².

2. Tertullian flourished at the end of the second and at the beginning of the third century.

¶ (1.) We must not call our senses in question lest we should doubt respecting their fidelity even in the case of Christ himself. For, if we question their

¹ Clem. Alex. *Paedag.* lib. ii. c. 2. *Oper.* p. 156.

² *Ibid.* p. 158.

fideliſy, we might be led to ſay: that Chriſt—TASTED A DIFFERENT FLAVOUR OF THE WINE WHICH HE CON-¹ SECATED IN MEMORY OF HIS OWN BLOOD¹.

(2.) If Chriſt declares, that *The FLESH profiteth nothing*; the ſenſe muſt be decided from the matter of the ſaying. For, becauſe the Jews deemed his diſcourſe hard and intolerable, as if He had truly determined that his FLESH was to be eaten by them: in order that He might diſpoſe the ſtate of ſalvation TOWARD THE SPIRIT, He promiſed; *It is the SPIRIT that quickeneth*. And thus He ſubjoined: *The FLESH profiteth nothing*, namely, to quicken. There follows alſo, WHAT HE WOULD HAVE US UNDERSTAND BY SPIRIT. *The words which I have ſpoken unto you, are ſpirit and life*².

(3.) Chriſt reprobated, neither the water of the Creator with which He waſhes his people, nor the oil with which He anoints them, nor the fellowſhip of honey and milk with which He feeds them as infants, nor the BREAD by which He REPRESENTS his own body: for, even in his ſacraments, He needs the beggarly elements of the Creator³.

3. Athanaſius flouriſhed in the fourth century.

When our Lord converſed on the eating of his body, and when He thence beheld many ſcandalized, He forthwith added: *Doth this offend you? What if ye ſhall behold the Son of man aſcending where he was before? It is the ſpirit that quickeneth: the fleſh profiteth nothing. The words which I ſpeak unto you, are ſpirit and life*. Both theſe matters, THE FLESH and THE SPIRIT, He ſaid reſpecting himſelf. And He diſtinguiſhed the ſpirit from the fleſh: IN ORDER THAT, BELIEVING BOTH THE VISIBLE AND THE INVISIBLE, THEY MIGHT UNDERSTAND HIS SAYINGS TO BE NOT CARNAL BUT SPIRITUAL. FOR TO HOW MANY PERSONS COULD HIS BODY HAVE SERVED

¹ Tertull. de anim. Oper. p. 653.

² Tertull. de reſurr. carn. § XLVIII. Oper. p. 69.

³ Tertull. adv. Marcion. lib. i. § 9. Oper. p. 156.

FICED FOR FOOD: SO THAT IT MIGHT BECOME THE ALIMENT OF THE WHOLE WORLD! But, that He might divert their minds from carnal cogitations, and that they might learn the flesh which He would give them to be supercelestial and spiritual food: He, on this account, mentioned the ascent of the Son of man to heaven. *The words, said He, which I speak unto you, are spirit and life.* As if He had intimated: My body, shall be exhibited and given as food for the world; so THAT THAT FOOD SHALL BE GIVEN TO EACH ONE SPIRITUALLY, and shall to all be a preservative to the resurrection unto life eternal¹.

4. Eusebius of Cesarea lived in the fourth century.

(1.) Christ himself gave the SYMBOLS of the divine economy to his own disciples: commanding, that the IMAGE of his own body should be made².

(2.) He delivered to us, that we should use the bread as the SYMBOL of his own body³.

5. Ambrose lived in the fourth century.

In the Law, was the shadow: in the Gospel, is the IMAGE: in heaven, is the REALITY. Formerly, a lamb was offered, a calf was offered: now, Christ is offered—Here, He is in an IMAGE: there, He is in REALITY⁴.

6. Macarius the Egyptian lived in the fourth century.

In the Church are offered bread and wine, the ANTITYPE of Christ's flesh and blood; and they, who partake of the visible bread, eat the flesh of the Lord SPIRITUALLY⁵.

7. Gregory of Nyssa lived in the fourth century.

Since this holy altar, at which we stand, is in its nature only a common stone, differing nothing from those other flat tablets, which are built into our walls or which ornament our pavements; but when it has

¹ Athan. in illud Evan. Quicumque dixerit. Oper. vol. 1. 771, 772.

² Euseb. Demons. Evan. lib. viii. c. 2. p. 236.

³ Ibid. p. 236.

⁴ Ambros. Officior. lib. 1. c. 48. Oper. col. 33.

⁵ Macar. Egypt. Homil. xxvii. For the scripturally determined sense of the word *Antitype*, see, in the original Greek, Heb. ix. 24.

Been dedicated to the service of God and has received the benediction, it is a holy table, an unpolluted altar, no longer indiscriminately handled by all, but touched only by the priests, and even by them with pious caution: and again, since the bread is originally ^{*}mere common bread; but, when the mystery shall have wrought its sanctification, it is both called and is the body of Christ: ~~thus~~ the mystic oil, ~~thus~~ the wine, though of small value before the benediction, respectively operate with mighty power after sanctification by the Spirit. The ~~same~~ potency of the word, moreover, effects a venerable and honourable priest: when through the newness of the benediction, the individual is separated from common fellowship with the many. For, only yesterday and the day before, he ~~was~~ nothing more than one out of the many, nothing more than one of the laity: but now he is set forth, as a leader, as a precessor, as a teacher of piety, as a hierophant of the hidden mysteries. And these things he does, not at all changed in body or in form: ~~but~~ he does them; being, in outward appearance, the same person that he was before; though, in his invisible soul, through a certain invisible power and grace, being transmuted into a better condition ¹.

8. Cyrus of Jerusalem lived in the fourth century.

(1.) While eating, the communicants are commanded to eat, not bread and wine, but the ANTI-TYPE of the body and blood of Christ ².

(2.) As ALSO the bread of the Eucharist, after the invocation of the Holy Spirit, is no longer bare bread, but the body of Christ: so LIKEWISE, after the invocation, this holy ointment (the ointment or chrism formerly used in the rite of Confirmation) is no longer mere ointment, nor as one may say common ointment ³.

9. Augustine ^{*}flourished in the fourth and fifth centuries.

¹ Gregor. Nyssen. in Baptism. Christ. Oper. vol ii. p. 801, 802.

² Cyril. Hieros. Cateth. Mystag. v. p. 244. ³ Ibid. iii. p. 235.

(1.) The Lord, when He gave the sign of his body, did not doubt to say: *This is my body*¹.

(2.) These are sacraments, in which, not *what they are*, but *what they show forth*, is the point to be always attended to: for THEY ARE THE SIGNS OF THINGS, BEING ONE THING, AND SIGNIFYING ANOTHER THING².

(3.) Christ instructed them, and said unto them: *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words which I speak unto you, are spirit and life.* As if He had said: Understand SPIRITUALLY what I have spoken. You are NOT about to eat this identical body, which you see; and you are NOT about to drink this identical blood, which they who crucify me will pour out. I have commended unto you a certain sacrament: which, if SPIRITUALLY understood, will vivify you. Though it must be celebrated visibly, it must be understood invisibly³.

(4.) In the interpretation of figurative passages, let the following canon be observed:—

• If the passage be preceptive, either forbidding some flagitious deed and some heinous crime, or commanding something useful and beneficent: then such passage is NOT FIGURATIVE. But, if the passage seems, either to command some flagitious deed and some heinous crime, or to forbid something useful and beneficent: then such passage is FIGURATIVE.

Thus, for example, Christ says: *Unless ye shall eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye shall have no life in you.*

Now in these words, He seems to command a heinous crime or a flagitious deed. THEREFORE THE PASSAGE IS A FIGURE⁴.

10. Theodoret lived in the fifth century.

(1.) Our Saviour interchanged the names: for to

¹ August. cont. Admant. c. xii. Oper. vol. vi. p. 69.

² August. cont. Maximin. lib. iii. c. 22. Oper. vol. vi. p. 275.

³ August. Enarr. in Psalm. xxviii. Oper. vol. vii. p. 397.

⁴ August. de Doctrin. Christian. lib. iii. c. 15, 16

his body He gave the name of the SYMBOL, while to the SYMBOL He gave the name of his body; and, having called himself A VINE, He applied the appellation of his blood to the SYMBOL.—Our Lord required: that they who partake of the divine mysteries, should not attend to the nature of the things which they see; but that, in the change of names, they should believe that change which is wrought by grace: inasmuch as He, who called his own natural body *wheat* and *bread*, and who further bestowed upon himself the appellation of a *vine*, honoured also the visible SYMBOLS with the name of his *body* and *blood*; NOT CHANGING THEIR NATURE, BUT ADDING GRACE TO NATURE¹.

(2.) THE MYSTIC SYMBOLS, AFTER CONSECRATION, PASS NOT OUT OF THEIR OWN NATURE: FOR THEY REMAIN IN THE FORMER SUBSTANCE and shape and appearance: and they are seen and touched, such as they were before. But they are understood to be what they were: and they are believed and venerated, as being those things which they are believed. Compare, therefore, the IMAGE with the ARCHETYPE; and you will perceive their resemblance: for the TYPE must needs be similar to the TRUTH².

11. Pope Gelasius lived in the fifth century: and in his quality of a Pope, speaking judicially or controversially, it is thought, that he specially merits the attention of the Romish Clergy.

Certainly the Sacraments of the body and blood of the Lord which we receive, are a divine thing: because, by these, we are made partakers of the divine nature. Nevertheless, THE SUBSTANCE OR NATURE OF THE BREAD AND WINE CEASES NOT TO EXIST: and, assuredly, the IMAGE and SIMILITUDE of the body and blood of Christ are celebrated in the action of the mysteries³.

¹ Theodoret. Dial. i. Oper. vol. iv. p. 17, 18.

² Ibid. Dial. ii. Oper. vol. iv. p. 84, 85.

³ Gelas. de dub. Christ. natur. in Biblioth. Patr. vol. iv. p. 422.

12. Vacundus lived in the sixth century.

The sacrament of adoption may be called *adoption*: just as the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, which sacrament is in the consecrated bread and wine, we are wont to call *his body and blood*. NOT, INDEED, THAT THE BREAD IS PROPERLY HIS BODY, OR THAT THE WINE IS PROPERLY HIS BLOOD: but we so denominate them, because they contain the mystery (or sacrament) of his body and blood within themselves. Hence it was, that our Lord called the consecrated bread and wine, which He delivered to his disciples, *his own body and blood*¹.

13. Ephrem of Antioch flourished in the sixth century.

The body of Christ, which is taken by the faithful, NEITHER DEPARTS FROM ITS SENSIBLE SUBSTANCE, on the one hand: nor remains separated from intellectual grace, on the other hand. And spiritual baptism, likewise, being whole and single, both retains the propriety of ITS SENSIBLE SUBSTANCE, I mean THE WATER: and loses not that, which it hath become².

14. The venerable Bede flourished in the eighth century.

The Lord, in the Supper, gave to his disciples the FIGURE of his holy body and blood³.

15. Amalar of Triers lived in the ninth century.

(1.) Sacraments ought to have a certain SIMILITUDE of those things, whereof they are sacraments. Let us, therefore, say: that the officiating priest bears a SIMILITUDE to Christ, AS the bread and wine bear a SIMILITUDE to the body and blood of Christ⁴.

(2.) After a certain mode, the sacrament of the body of Christ is Christ's body. For, unless sacraments had a certain SIMILITUDE of those things whereof they are sacraments, they would not be

¹ Vacund. Defens. Concil. Chalced. lib ix. c. 5. Oper. p. 144.

² Ephrem. Theopolitan. apud Phot. Bibl. cod. ccxix. p. 794.

³ Bed. Comment. in Psalm. iii.

⁴ Amalar. de Eccles. Offic. in Præfat.

sacraments at all: but, FROM THIS VERY SIMILITUDE, THEY COMMONLY RECEIVE THE NAMES OF THE THINGS THEMSELVES ¹.

16. Walafrid Strabo lived in the ninth century.

Christ, in the Supper, which, before his betrayal, He had celebrated with his disciples after the solemnization of the ancient Passover, delivered to the same disciples the sacraments of his body and blood IN THE SUBSTANCE OF BREAD AND WINE:—and taught them; that they ought to pass, from things CARNAL to things SPIRITUAL, from things EARTHLY to things HEAVENLY, from IMAGES to TRUTH ².

17. Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop of Mentz, lived in the ninth century.

LATELY, indeed, SOME INDIVIDUALS, not thinking rightly concerning the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord, have said, that *That very body and blood of the Lord, which was born from the Virgin Mary, in which the Lord himself suffered on the cross, and in the which he rose again from the sepulchre, is the same as that which is received from the altar.* IN OPPOSITION TO WHICH ERROR as far as lay in our power, writing to the Abbot Egilus, WE PROFOUNDED WHAT OUGHT TRULY TO BE BELIEVED CONCERNING THE BODY ITSELF ³.

18. Bertram of Corby lived in the ninth century.

Let us now consider the question: *Whether the identical body, which was born from Mary and suffered and died and was buried, and which now sits at the right hand of the Father, is that, which in the Church is daily received by the mouth of the faithful through the mystery of the sacraments.*—

ACCORDING TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CREATURES, WHAT THEY WERE BEFORE CONSECRATION, THAT ALSO THEY ARE AFTER IT.—

Spiritual flesh which is received by the mouth of

¹ Amalar. de Eccles. Offic. lib. i. c. 24.

² Walafr. Strab. de Reb. Eccles. c. xiv.

³ Raban. Mogunt. Epist. ad Heribald. de Euchar. c. xxxii.

the faithful, and spiritual blood which is daily given to be drunk by the faithful, DIFFER from the flesh which was crucified, and from the blood which was shed by the lance of the soldier.

THEREFORE THEY ARE NOT THE SAME ¹.

IV. The plain inquirer will now judge for himself: whether the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation, with the associated practice of adoring as God the consecrated elements, be taught either in Scripture, or by the early Fathers.

As for Scripture, sufficient has already been said: and, with respect to the evidence afforded by the ancient Doctors of the Catholic Church, those Doctors, we see, protest *against* any such new-fangled notions, not only during the three first centuries, but down even to the ninth century; and they protest, moreover, in every possible way that could well have been either required or imagined.

1. According to *their* interpretation of Scripture, which manifestly was the interpretation received as orthodox by the universal Church at the times when they respectively flourished, we have the following very distinct and very important results:

(1.) The consecrated elements are IMAGES or SYMBOLS or TYPES or SIGNS or REPRESENTATIONS of the body and blood of Christ.

(2.) Communicants do NOT partake of that *literal* body and blood, in which the Lord suffered and which He shed on the cross.

(3.) The symbols of bread and wine, AFTER consecration, STILL REMAIN UNCHANGED IN THEIR ORIGINAL SUBSTANCE: and consequently they are NOT transubstantiated.

(4.) Christ called the bread and wine *his body and blood*, IN THE SAME SENSE and ON THE SAME PRINCIPLE that He called himself *a vine*.

(5.) When the early writers style the bread and

¹ Bertin, de corp^e et sanguin. Domin. p. 203, 205 213, 214.

wine *the body and blood of Christ*; or when they say, that *the bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ*; or when they affirm, that *the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ*: they themselves state, by way of explanation, that they only speak metonymically and figuratively. For they distinctly tell us: that they are wont to call the bread and wine *Christ's body and blood*; NOT BECAUSE THE BREAD IS PROPERLY HIS BODY, OR BECAUSE THE WINE IS PROPERLY HIS BLOOD; but only because they contain the sacrament of his body and blood within themselves, or because the IMAGE and SIMILITUDE of his body and blood are exhibited in the due celebration of the Eucharist.

(6.) Hence in strict consistency, the *sole* change in the elements, produced by consecration, is said, by the same early writers, to be a MORAL and not a PHYSICAL change. For they pronounce it to be such a change, as is produced in the confirmatory chrism or in the stone of an altar-table or in the baptismal water; when, by consecration, they cease to be secular, and are devoted to sacred purposes: and, even yet more remarkably, they pronounce it to be such a change, as is produced in a man; when, by ordination, he ceases to be a laic, and becomes a clerk.

2. Nor do we thus find, in the old Doctors of the Church, a mere simple *anticipatory* protest against the modern Romish dogma, of Transubstantiation: we may note also, in the case of Raban and Bertram, a formal direct *synchronic* protest against the wild notion of *Christ's* CORPOREAL OR LITERAL OR SUBSTANTIAL *presence in the Eucharist*, when, in the ninth century, and under the fostering management of Paschase Radbert, it was attempting to creep into the hitherto untainted Western Churches.

No sooner was the idle phantasy started; that *The identical body and blood of Christ, in which He was born from the Virgin Mary, is literally and substantially received from the altar*: than it was distinctly

and openly opposed, on the specific ground, not only of *its abstract scriptural falsehood*, but likewise of *its palpable novelty* and *its then scanty reception*. For all these three points are clearly set forth by Archbishop Raban in his three very remarkable expressions, **LATELY**, and **SOME INDIVIDUALS**, and **NOT THINKING RIGHTLY**.

CHAPTER III.

PURGATORY.

FROM the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation, I shall pass on to the Romish doctrine of Purgatory.

I. Respecting a Purgatory, into which the souls of all, save those who are immediately conveyed to Hell, pass forthwith after death; in order that, by its fiery pains, they may be purified from the remainder of their corruption, and at the same time by personal suffering may make satisfaction to God for their hitherto unexpiated offences: the Church of Rome, speaking through her organ the Council of Trent, thus defines and pronounces.

There is a purgatory: and the souls there detained are assisted by the suffrages of the faithful, and most especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar¹.

II. Such is the authorised doctrine of the Roman Church: let us now see, whether the existence of a Purgatory in the unseen world be revealed in Scripture.

1. On this point, we may begin with very safely remarking: that, from the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of the Revelation, God's written word, whether Jewish or Christian, SAYS NOT A SINGLE SYLLABLE concerning the existence of any such place as a Romish Purgatory.

Whence, of course, it is EQUALLY SILENT, respect-

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. xxv. p. 505, 506. Profess. Fid. Trident. Syllog. Confess. p. 4.

ing the extraordinary alleged fact: that, *Souls, there detained, are assisted by the suffrages or prayers of the faithful, and most especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar.*

2. But Holy Scripture is not merely SILENT on this subject; by anticipation, it even FLATLY CONTRADICTS the popish doctrine before us.

*I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me: Write; Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, THAT THEY MAY REST FROM THEIR LABOURS; and their works do follow them*¹.

If, as the Romish Clergy teach, even those, who die in the Lord, pass into Purgatory, where they suffer pains equal to those of Hell in intensity, and inferior to them only in duration: certainly such souls can with no truth be said henceforth to rest from their labours.

3. In reality, the very notion of a Purgatory stands irreconcilably^{*} opposed to the whole scheme and analogy of Scripture.

For the doctrine of a Purgatory holds out the speculation: that, *By penal suffering, we both may be purified from our sins, and likewise may make personal meritorious satisfaction to God for them.*

Whereas Scripture teaches us: that, *We are justified from our sins by the sole merits of the Son, and that, We are sanctified from our pollutions by the exclusive ordinary operation of the Spirit.*

On the present point, then, are we to believe the Bible, or the Council of Trent and the Latin Priesthood?

4. Finding it impossible to establish the existence of a Purgatory from the genuine written word of God, the Romish Clergy attempt to substantiate it from a text in the Apocrypha.

When Judas had made a gathering throughout the

¹ Rev. xiv. 13.

company to the sum of two thousand drachms of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem, to offer a sin-offering; doing therein well and honestly, in that he was mindful of the resurrection (for, if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead), and also in that he perceived that there was great favour laid up for those that died godly. It was a holy and good thought. Whereupon, he made a reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin¹.

Now this text, even if we could admit the canonical authority of a book which praises self-murder, and which apologises for its own defects², would stand the Latin Priesthood in small stead: for it never once mentions any Purgatory; and the persons, moreover, for whom Judas attempted to make reconciliation, were actually men who had died in the mortal sin of idolatry unrepented of, and consequently were men who (by the determination of the Council of Trent) had passed not into Purgatory, but into Hell³.

In truth, however, for the too evident purpose of serving a turn, the doctors of the Council of Trent, in defiance of the universal testimony of the early Church, as expressed most distinctly by Melito and Cyril and Ruffinus and Jerome and Epiphanius and Athanasius, have foisted into the genuine canon of inspired Scripture, those mere unauthoritative human compositions, which are commonly styled *apocryphal*, and for the simple quoting of which, about the close of the sixth century, Pope Gregory the Great absolutely makes a regular formal apology⁴.

¹ 2 Macc. xii. 43—46.

² 2 Macc. xiv. 37—46; xv. 37, 38.

³ 2 Macc. xii. 39—42.

Concil. Trident. sess. xiv. c. 1, 5. p. 144. 148, 149. sess. xxv. 506.

⁴ Melit. Sardens. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. 25. Cyril. Hieros. Catech. iv. p. 37, 38. Ruffin. Expos. in Symbol. Apost. ad calc. Cyprian. Oper. p. 26, 27. Hieron. Prolog. Scriptur. Galeat. Oper. vol. iii. p. 287. Epiphan. de mensur. et ponderib. Oper. p. 300. Athan. Epist. Festal. xxxix. Oper. vol. ii. p. 44, 45. Athan. Succinct. Script. Synop. Oper. vol. ii. p. 61—63, 101, 133. Gregor. Magn. Moral.

As one out of our many witnesses against these daring innovators, let us hear, from the fourth century, the venerable Cyril of Jerusalem, while officially instructing his Catechumens in order to their baptism.

Read the twenty and two books contained in the Old Testament: but WITH THE APOCRYPHA HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON. Study diligently those twenty and two books ALONE, which also with confidence are read in the Church. The Apostles and the ancient Bishops, who delivered those books to us, were much wiser than you. As children of the Church, therefore, set not upon her authorised documents the adulterating seal of a false impression¹.

This *adulterating seal of a false impression*, so strongly reprobated by Cyril in the fourth century, was, in the sixteenth century, employed, without the least scruple, for the impious corruption of God's written word, by the Romish Clergy at the Council of Trent.

III. From Scripture, let us proceed to the early Fathers of the Church.

1. In the way of *negative* evidence, Polycarp the disciple of St. John, Athenagoras, and Irenæus, who collectively flourished during a period which extends from the latter end of the first to the latter end of the second century, are TOTALLY SILENT respecting the existence of a Purgatory; even when the nature of their subject is such, that, had they been acquainted with the doctrine, they *must* have mentioned it².

2. In the way of *positive* evidence, Clement of Rome, the disciple and fellow-labourer of St. Paul,

in Job. lib. xix. c. 13. As if in bitter mockery of the popish proof of the doctrine of a Purgatory from the second book of Maccabees, Rufinus tells us, in the fifth century, that, although the apocryphal books might be read in churches for edification, they were not to be controversially adduced as any authority for the settlement of a point of faith and doctrine. Pope Gregory says the same.

¹ Cyril. Hieros. Catech. iv. p. 37.

² Polycarp. Epist. ad Philip. § 2. 7. Athenag. de Resurrect. Mortuor. Oper. p. 143—219. Iren. adv. Hær. lib. v. c. 26. p. 356.

Ignatius the disciple of St. John, Justin Martyr, Hippolytus, and Cyprian, who collectively flourished during a period which extends from the year 63 to the year 258, either by anticipation EXPRESSLY CONTRADICT, or else use language PALPABLY INCOMPATIBLE WITH, the doctrine of a Purgatory¹.

3. When this doctrine began to creep into the Church, the individuals, who started it, could not agree among themselves, either as to *its nature*, or as to *its certainty*, or as to *its chronological location*; and, what is sufficiently whimsical, not one among them agreed with the present Church of Rome².

Now, if the doctrine of a Purgatory had been *uniformly* and *universally* and *constantly* held in the Church Catholic from the very beginning, as the Romish Clergy would persuade us: it is quite clear, that this curious discrepancy could never have occurred.

4. At present, the members of the Latin Church pray for the dead, *with the avowed object that their souls may be delivered from Purgatory*: but, when prayers for the dead first came into use, those prayers were offered up *with no such purpose and intention*.

Let it be known and observed (for many are ignorant of the circumstance): that, at the commencement of the practice, supplication was made, not *that souls might be delivered from Purgatory*, but *that they might be partakers of the first resurrection*³: and the notion itself evidently originated from

¹ Clem. Rom. Epist. ad Corinth. ii. § 8. Ignat. Epist. ad Magnes. § 5. Justin. Dial. cum Tryph. Oper. p. 270. Hippolyt. e libr. adv. Græc. Oper. vol. i. p. 220, 221. Cyprian. ad Demetrian. Oper. vol. i. p. 196.

² Tertull. de Anim. Oper. p. 689. Cyril. Hieros. Catech. Mystag. v. 241. Ambros. Enarr. in Psalm l. Oper. col. 1286. August. de H. et Oper. c. xv. Oper. vol. iv. p. 28, 29. August. de Ign. Purgat. Cyp. iv. Oper. vol. x. p. 382. August. de octo Dulcit. quæst. Oper. iii. p. 250. August. Enarr. in Psalm ciii. conc. 3. Oper. vol. viii. Epist. August. de Civ. Dei. lib. x. c. 25, 26. Script. tull. de Monogam. § 10. Oper. p. 578.

a gratuitous interpretation of a well-known obscure text in the Apocalypse ¹.

5. The unauthorised practice of praying for the dead, under *any* aspect, being thus plainly a mere innovation upon the primitive simplicity of the Gospel ; its utility, as we learn from Cyril of Jerusalem, was questioned by MANY, even so late as the middle of the fourth century. Finding not a vestige of the thing in the whole Bible, and naturally judging that we can know nothing about the matter save from a distinct revelation, they very sensibly asked : *How is the soul benefited by any such mention of it, whether it depart from this world with sin or without sin* ² ?

It were well, if the Romish Clergy, when they boast of the immutability of their doctrine and practice, would account for these odd variations.

IV. Meanwhile, let the sober inquirer judge for himself, whether there be even a shadow for the idle plea : that the doctrine of Purgatory is revealed in the Bible, and that it was maintained from the beginning by all the early Fathers.

CHAPTER IV.

UNWRITTEN TRADITION, AND INSUFFICIENCY OF THE WRITTEN WORD ALONE.

I SHALL next proceed to examine the Romish assertions respecting Unwritten Tradition and the Insufficiency of the written Word alone.

I. Although the Church of Rome, speaking through the Council of Trent, claims the Written Word of God as a voucher for her doctrines ; yet as if conscious, that, from Scripture ALONE, her peculiarities cannot be established as a part of divine revelation, she asserts : that *Unwritten Tradition ought to be*

¹ Rev. xx. 4—6.

² Cyril. Hieros. Catech. Mystag. v. p. 241.

had in EQUAL reverence with the Written Word; so that, what cannot be proved from the Written Word, must be received without hesitation, if it be propounded by Unwritten Tradition.

From this assertion it evidently results: that, *Without the concurrence of a supplemental Unwritten Tradition, the Written Word, or the Holy Bible, is defective and insufficient as a rule of faith and practice.*

The Holy Synod, say the doctors of the Council of Trent, perceiving, that this faith and discipline are contained, both in the Written Books, and in the Unwritten Traditions which have descended to us from Christ and his Apostles, receives and venerates, after the example of the orthodox Fathers, WITH AN EQUAL AFFECTION AND PIOUS REVERENCE, both all the Books of the Old and New Testaments, and likewise the Traditions themselves, whether appertaining to faith or to morals, as if orally dictated from Christ and the Holy Spirit, and as preserved by continual succession in the Church Catholic¹.

II. Let us now hear what Scripture says on the topic at present under discussion.

1. The unwritten traditions of the Rabbins, by which they made void the Law of God, claimed to have been delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai by the Lord himself: and their pretended authenticity rested precisely upon the same mode of reasoning, as that employed for their parallel unwritten traditions, by the Clergy of the Roman Communion. Yet Christ reprobated such vain unhallowed phantasies in language, and on principles, which equally apply to the antiscriptural unwritten traditions of the Latin Church.

He answered and said unto them: Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying; Honour

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. iv. p. 7, 8.

*thy father and thy mother; and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition*¹.

Now, where is the perceptible difference, between the conduct of the Jewish Rabbins, and the conduct of the Romish Clergy?

(1.) The Written Word commanded, that a man should honour his father and mother.

But the Jewish Rabbins made this commandment of none effect by their Unwritten Tradition, that if a man vowed to dedicate his substance to God, he was not bound to relieve out of it the necessities of his parents.

(2.) The Written Word has prohibited the bowing down before graven images, and the invocation of any being save the Deity.

But the Romish Clergy have made this prohibition of none effect by their Unwritten Tradition, that images may be worshipped relatively with the worship due to their prototypes, that dead saints may be justifiably invoked to give us their intercessory assistance, and that, provided only we take care to denominate the worship of the Saints and the Virgin *Dulia* and *Hyperdulia*, while we rigidly style the worship of the Deity *Latria*, we may laudably (after the precise manner of the old Pagan idolaters²) kiss and uncover our heads and fall prostrate before their images, duly through each image (again on the exact avowed principle of the same old Pagan idolaters³) referring to each being represented by

¹ Matt. xv. 3—6.

² See 1 Kings xix. 18. Job xxxi. 27. Hos. xiii. 2.

³ See Orig. cont. Cels. lib. vi. p. 284. Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. vi. p. 195. Lactant. Divin. Instit. lib. ii. § 2. p. 141.

such image his own appropriate reverence and adoration¹.

2. A similar admonition against the vanity of following Unwritten Tradition rather than the certainty of the Written Word, is given by the Apostle St. Paul.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ².

3. The Romish pretence of an EQUALLY authoritative Unwritten Tradition plainly involves an assertion of the Insufficiency of the Written Word. But the Written Word declares its own Sufficiency. Therefore, on that precise ground, it condemns the Romish pretence of an EQUALLY authoritative concurrent Unwritten Tradition.

(1.) *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it: that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you³.*

(2.) *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them⁴.*

(3.) *Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed⁵.*

(4.) *From a child, thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God: and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,*

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. xxv. p. 507, 508.

² Deut. iv. 2.

⁴ Isaiah viii. 20.

³ Coloss. ii. 6—8.

⁵ Galat. i. 8.

for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works¹.

4. The Romish Clergy are wont to tell us, that their scheme of concurrent Unwritten Tradition is recognised and enjoined even by Scripture: because St. Paul speaks of a brother walking disorderly, and not after the TRADITION received from himself by the Thessalonians²; because the same St. Paul exhorts the same Thessalonians to stand fast and hold the TRADITIONS which they had been taught, whether by word or by his epistle³; and because still the same St. Paul praises the Corinthians, for remembering him in all things, and for keeping the TRADITIONS he delivered to them⁴.

Respecting this vain plea, which can only mislead the ignorant and the incautious, we readily answer in manner following.

(1.) St. Paul must not be interpreted, so as to contradict both his Lord and himself.

(2.) The Romish Clergy cannot prove, that *all* the Traditions, mentioned by the Apostle, were *unwritten*: for some are distinctly specified as taught by a *written* epistle; and the simple word *Tradition* itself, which merely denotes *any thing handed down or delivered or communicated*, has no necessary reference to what is *unwritten* rather than to what is *written*.

(3.) It is not known by the Romish Clergy: whether the *originally* oral unwritten traditions, mentioned by St. Paul, were not *finally* committed to durable writing in documents, composed *subsequently* to those epistles in which he mentions them, and *afterward* added to the sacred canon; so that, what were *once* unwritten traditions, became *ultimately* a portion of our present written word: for the plain reader may be usefully taught or reminded, that

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.

² 2 Thess. iii. 6.

³ 2 Thess. ii. 15.

⁴ 1 Corinth. xi. 2.

several portions of the New Testament were written at a *later* period than the epistles in which St. Paul speaks of Traditions.

(4.) Whensocver the Romish Clergy shall *prove* the unwritten traditions of their Church to have been received from Christ and his apostles with as much certainty, as the Thessalonians and Corinthians *knew* what they had personally received from the mouth of St. Paul, we will cheerfully attend to them with all due reverence.

(5.) Both on the principle of our Lord's own censure of the rabbinical traditions, and likewise on the principle of plain common sense, we cannot embrace oral traditions purporting to be God's unwritten word; when they are *palpably irreconcilable with, and grossly contradictory to*, God's own acknowledged written word. •

III. We may now, in the way of historical testimony, go on profitably to hear the ancient Fathers: those identical old orthodox Fathers to wit, whom, in respect to the present question, the doctors of the Council of Trent, as the reader may peradventure recollect, claim as being clearly and indisputably quite their own.

1. Let us first attend to Irenæus in the second century.

(1.) The disposition of our salvation we know not through any other persons than those by whom the Gospel has come to us: which then, indeed, they themselves orally preached; but which afterward, according to the will of God, they traditionally handed down to us IN THE WRITTEN WORD, as the future basis and column of our faith¹.

(2.) When the Gnostics are confuted from SCRIPTURE, their answer is: that, *By those who are ignorant of UNWRITTEN TRADITION, truth cannot be discovered from THE WRITTEN WORD; for truth was*

¹ Iren. adv. Hær. lib. iii. c. 1. p. 169.

*delivered not (merely) through letters, but through the living voice*¹.

2. Let us next hear Tertullian in the second and third centuries.

As for Hermogenes, let his shop produce THE WRITTEN WORD. If he be unable to produce THE WRITTEN WORD in substantiation of his tenets, let him dread that scriptural *Woe*, which is destined to those who either add to it or detract from it².

3. Let us next hear Hippolytus in the third century.

There is one God, whom we know from no other authority than THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.—Whatsoever matters, then, the DIVINE SCRIPTURES declare, these let us learn; and whatsoever matters they teach, these let us recognise:—not according to our own humour or according to our own mind, neither with any wresting of the things delivered from God; but, even as He himself wished THROUGH THE HOLY SCRIPTURES to shew us, thus let us learn³.

4. Let us next hear Cyprian in the third century.

Whence is that pretended TRADITION? Does it descend from the authority of the Lord and the Gospels: or does it come down from the mandates and letters of the Apostles? God testifies, that those things are to be done, which are WRITTEN.—If, then, any such precept can be found, EITHER IN THE GOSPEL OR IN THE EPISTLES AND ACTS OF THE APOSTLES;—let this divine and holy (written) tradition be observed⁴.

5. Let us next hear Cyril of Jerusalem in the fourth century.

Respecting the divine and holy mysteries of the faith, not even a tittle ought to be delivered without the authority of THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. Neither

¹ Iren. adv. Hær. lib. iii. c. 2. 169.

² Tertull. adv. Hermog. § 12. Oper. p. 346.

³ Hippol. cont. Noet. § ix. Oper. vol. ii. p. 12, 13.

⁴ Cyprian. Epist. lxxiv. Oper. vol. ii. p. 211.

ought any thing to be propounded, on the basis of mere credibility, or through the medium of plausible ratiocination. Neither yet repose the slightest confidence in the bare assertions of me your Catechist, unless you shall receive from **THE HOLY SCRIPTURES** full demonstration of the matters propounded. For the security of our faith depends, not upon verbal trickery, but upon demonstration from **THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**¹.

6. Let us next hear the great Athanasius in the fourth century.

(1.) The holy and divinely inspired **SCRIPTURES** are sufficient for the declaration of the truth².

(2.) Let a person solely learn the matters, which are set forth in **THE SCRIPTURES**: for the demonstrations, contained in them, are, in order to the settling of this point, quite sufficient and complete³.

(3.) If ye are disciples of the Gospels,—walk according to **WHAT IS WRITTEN**. But, if you choose to allege any other matters **BEYOND WHAT IS WRITTEN**; why do you contend against us, **WHO WILL NEVER BE PERSUADED EITHER TO HEAR OR TO SPEAK A SINGLE SYLLABLE BEYOND GOD'S WRITTEN WORD**⁴?

(4.) These; namely, the canonical books of Scripture, from which the apocryphal books are carefully excluded by the accurate Father; these are the fountains of salvation; so that he, who thirsts, may drink from the oracles contained in them. In **THESE ALONE** is the evangelical school of piety. Let no one add to them; and let no one detract from them⁵.

(5.) It is the part of mere triflers to propound and to speak **THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT WRITTEN**⁶.

¹ Cyril. Hieros. Catech. iv. p. 30.

² Athan. Orat. cont. Gent. Oper. vol. i. p. 1.

³ Athan. ad Serap. Oper. vol. i. p. 359.

⁴ Athan. de incar. Christ. Oper. vol. i. p. 484.

⁵ Athan. Epist. Fest. xxxix. Oper. vol. ii. p. 45.

⁶ Athan. Epist. ad Serap. Oper. vol. ii. p. 29.

(6.) What **THE WRITTEN WORD** has never revealed, you will never be able to discover¹.

7. Let us next hear Basil in the fourth century.

(1.) It is a manifest apostacy from the faith, and a clear proof of arrogance, either to disregard any matter of **THE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN**, or to introduce argumentatively any matter of **THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT WRITTEN**².

(2.) **THE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN** believe: **THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT WRITTEN** seek not after³.

8. Let us next hear Jerome in the fourth and fifth centuries.

(1.) As we deny not **THE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN**: so **THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT WRITTEN** we reject. We believe, that God was born of a virgin, **BECAUSE WE READ IT**: we believe not, that Mary was married after her parturition; **BECAUSE WE READ IT NOT**⁴.

(2.) Learn, then, in **THE DIVINE SCRIPTURES**, through which **ALONE** you can understand the full will of God, that some things are prohibited and that other things are commanded, that some things are granted and that other things are persuaded⁵.

9. Finally, let us hear Augustine in the fourth and fifth centuries.

Demonstrate, from any one of **THE CANONICAL APOSTLES AND PROPHETS**, the truth of what Cyprian has written to Jubaianus: and I should then have no room for contradiction. But now, since what you produce is **NOT CANONICAL**; through the liberty to which the Lord hath called us, I receive not the decision⁶.

¹ Athan. de S. Trin. dial. ii. Oper. vol. ii. p. 172.

² Basil. de Ver. Fid. Oper. vol. ii. p. 386.

³ Basil. Homil. de Trin. xxix.

⁴ Hieron. adv. Helvid. c. ix. Oper. vol. ii. p. 116.

⁵ Hieron. ad Demet. de virgin. Oper. vol. ix. p. 4.

⁶ August. cont. Crescon. lib. ii. c. 32. Oper. vol. vii. p. 160.

IV. From the evidence now faithfully laid before him, the prudent inquirer is invited to judge for himself: whether the Romish doctrine, of *the concurrent EQUAL authority of Unwritten Tradition and the insufficiency of the Written Word alone*, be warranted either by Scripture or by the early Fathers.

Meanwhile the following questions may not be altogether unworthy of his attention.

1. Do, or do not, the doctors of the Council of Trent, agreeably to their own formal and distinct profession, follow the example of the old orthodox Fathers, when they decide, that *the Written Word of God, and the Unwritten Traditions of the Latin Church, are to be received by the faithful with an EQUAL affection and pious reverence?*

2. Do, or do not, the Romish Clergy imitate the Gnostics, who, when they were confuted from Scripture, were accustomed to reply; that, *by those who are ignorant of Unwritten Tradition, truth cannot be discovered from the Written Word?*

3. Do, or do not, the Romish Clergy copy the example of Cyril of Jerusalem, who declared, that, *respecting the faith, NOT A TITTLE ought to be delivered without the authority of the Holy Scriptures;* and who exhorted his Catechumens to *repose not THE SLIGHTEST CONFIDENCE in his assertions, unless they should receive from the holy Scriptures full demonstration of the matters propounded?*

4. Do, or do not, the Romish Clergy teach, with Athanasius, that *the Scriptures ALONE are sufficient for the declaration of the truth;* and that, *in the canonical Scriptures ALONE, to the exclusion of the Apocrypha, is the evangelical school of piety?*

5. Do, or do not, the Romish Clergy declare, with the same illustrious Father, that *they will never be persuaded either to hear or to speak A SINGLE SYLLABLE beyond God's written word?*

6. Do, or do not, the Romish Clergy pronounce

still with the great Athanasius, that *it is the part of mere triflers to propound and to speak the things which are not written?*

7. Do, or do not, the doctors of the Council of Trent, and after them our present Romish Clergy, take up, and make their own, the ancient pithy distinction of Jerome: *The things which are written we acknowledge; the things which are not written we reject?*

8. Do, or do not, the Romish Clergy make a point with Tertullian, of *always requiring the production of proof from the Written Word*: and do they, or do they not, allow and maintain, with the same Father, that *he, who is unable to produce the Written Word in substantiation of his tenets, but who for that purpose resorts to Unwritten Tradition, may well dread the awful woe so justly denounced against those who either add to it or detract from it?*

9. Finally, in their several estimates of Unwritten Tradition and the Written Word, and in their several modes of conducting those theological controversies which respect the authoritative rule of faith and practice, do the Romish Clergy or the Reformed Clergy approximate most closely to Holy Scripture and to the ancient orthodox Fathers?

CHAPTER V.

MERITORIOUS SATISFACTION.

FROM the perfect equality of Unwritten Tradition and the Written Word of God, we may next proceed to the doctrine of Meritorious Satisfaction.

I. The Church of Rome lays down her decision, respecting what she calls *Works of Satisfaction*, in manner following.

So great is the abundance of divine munificence, that we are able to make satisfaction to God the Father through Jesus Christ, not only by punishments

either spontaneously undergone by ourselves for the avenging of sin, or imposed upon us by the will of the priest according to the measure of our offence, but also (what is the greatest argument of love) by temporal flagellations inflicted of God and by us patiently endured¹.

II. Thus speaks the Roman Church: let us now hear the declarations of Holy Scripture.

1. *When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do*².

2. *Two men went up into the temple to pray: the one, a Pharisee; and the other, a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week: I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven; but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner! I tell you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one, that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he, that humbleth himself, shall be exalted*³.

3. *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law*⁴.

4. *If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God: and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now, to him that worketh, is the reward reckoned, not of grace, but of debt. But, to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*⁵.

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. xiv. c. 9. p. 158, 159.

² Luke xvii. 10.

³ Luke xviii. 10—14.

⁴ Rom. ii. 27, 28.

⁵ Rom. iv. 2—5.

5. *Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*¹.

6. *They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God*².

7. *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*³.

III. Let us next attend to the language of the old orthodox Fathers.

1. Clement of Rome, in the first century, speaks as follows.

All, therefore, have been glorified and magnified, not through themselves or through their own works of righteousness which they have done, but through the will of God. Wherefore, being called through his will in Christ Jesus, we are justified, not through ourselves, or through our own wisdom or intellect or piety, or through the works which we have wrought in holiness of heart; but through faith, by which the Almighty God has justified us all from everlasting⁴.

2. The author of the Epistle to Diognetus, in the first or second century, speaks exactly to the same purpose.

What else can cover our sins, than the righteousness of Christ? In what can we lawless and impious wretches be justified, save only in the Son of God⁵?

3. Ambrose of Milan, in the fourth century, still holds the same language.

(1.) By what labours, by what injuries, can we lighten our sins? The sufferings of this time are, in reference to future glory, altogether unworthy. Hence, toward man, the form of celestial decrees

¹ Rom. v. 1.

² Rom. x. 3.

³ Isaiah lxiv. 6.

⁴ Clem. Roman. Epist. ad Corinth. i. § 32.

⁵ Epist. ad Diognet. in Oper. Justin Martyr. p. 386.

proceeds, not according to our merits, but according to the mercy of God ¹.

(2.) Would that the Lord would not reject, but collect, this my mere stubble in the harvest, these empty wild oats of my fructification!—It is fitting, therefore, to believe; both that penance is to be performed, and that pardon is to be granted: nevertheless, in such manner, that we should hope for pardon, as from faith, not as from debt ².

4. Augustine, in the fourth and fifth centuries, exactly agrees with his predecessors.

The sins are thine: the merits are God's. To thee punishment is due: and when the reward shall come, He will crown his own gifts, not thy merits ³.

IV. Let the patient inquirer now judge for himself: whether the Romish doctrine, that *Punishments, either self-inflicted, or commanded by a priest, or sent in the course of God's providence, can make satisfaction to the Father through Christ in our behalf*, be the doctrine either of Scripture or of the early Church.

V. But, if no man can make satisfaction for *his own* sins, still less, according to the monstrous phantasy of Supererogation, can he make satisfaction for the sins of *others*.

Yet this impious absurdity was openly advanced in the papal bull for the observation of a jubilee in the recent year 1825.

We have resolved, says Pope Leo, BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY GIVEN TO US FROM HEAVEN, *fully to unlock that sacred treasure composed of the merits, sufferings, and virtues, of Christ our Lord and of his Virgin-Mother and of all the Saints, WHICH THE AUTHOR OF HUMAN SALVATION HAS ENTRUSTED TO*

¹ Ambros. Comment. in Psalm cxviii. (cxix.) serm. xx. ver. 4. Oper. col. 1595.

² Ambros. de Pœnit. lib. ii. c. 8. Oper. col. 191.

³ August. Enarr. in Psalm lxx. Oper. vol. viii. p. 277.

OUR DISPENSATION.—*To you, therefore, venerable brethren, Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, it belongs to explain with perspicuity the power of Indulgences; what is their efficacy in the remission, not only of the canonical penance, but also of the temporal punishment due to the divine justice for past sin; and what succour is afforded, out of this heavenly treasure, from the merits of Christ and his Saints, to such as have departed real penitents in God's love, yet before they had duly satisfied by fruits worthy of penance for sins of commission and omission, and are now purifying in the fire of Purgatory, that an entrance may be opened for them into their eternal country where nothing defiled is admitted.*

1. Where is Pope Leo's PROOF of the validity of his claim to an authority given to him from heaven: by virtue of which authority he fully unlocks a sacred treasure, composed of the merits of Christ and the Virgin Mary and all the Saints, and entrusted by the blessed Author of our salvation to the wisdom of his doling out?

Let such PROOF be produced, if the Romish Clergy can produce it, either from the Bible, or even from the received doctrine of the primitive Church Catholic.

2. By what evidence does Pope Leo SUBSTANTIATE his assertion: that *Souls in Purgatory are benefited by the supererogatory merits of the Virgin Mary and the Saints, strangely associated with the all-sufficient merits of the Redeemer?*

Let the Romish Clergy, if they be able, SUBSTANTIATE this most extraordinary allegation.

3. Where is Pope Leo's PROOF of the very position, upon which the whole of his bull professedly reposes; the position to wit, that *The Virgin Mary and the Saints not only have merit enough to make satisfaction for their own sins, but have even merit to spare for the benefit of less privileged souls in Purgatory?*

From the Bible, or from the Doctors of the primitive Church, let his venerable Brethren, Patriarchs,

Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops, bring forward, if they *can* accomplish such a feat, the PROOF of this very remarkable position.

CHAPTER VI.

SAINT-WORSHIP, IMAGE-WORSHIP, RELIC-WORSHIP, CROSS-WORSHIP.

I SHALL next examine the doctrine and practice of Saint-worship, Image-worship, Relic-worship, and Cross-worship.

I. In exhibiting the tenets of the Romish Church and Clergy on these several points, I shall successively give—the decision of the Council of Trent; the comments of some of the most approved Latin Doctors; and the actual practice of the Romanists themselves as the best explanation of their received tenets.

1. Let us first hear the decision of the Council of Trent.

All Bishops, and others who discharge the duty of teaching, must diligently instruct the faithful concerning the intercession and invocation of the Saints, the honouring of Relics, and the legitimate use of Images.

For this purpose, they must teach them, that the Saints, reigning with Christ, offer up their prayers to God for men; and that it is good and useful, suppliantly to invoke them, and to flee to their prayers and assistance for the purpose of obtaining benefits from God through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our only Redeemer and Saviour.

Furthermore, they must teach them, that those, who deny that the Saints in heaven ought to be invoked, or who assert either that they do not pray for men, or that the invoking of them to pray for us is idolatry, or that it is contrary to God's word and ad-

verse to the honour of Jesus Christ the only mediator between God and man, or that it is foolish by voice or in mind to supplicate those who reign in heaven, think impiously.

They must also teach them, that the holy bodies of the Saints and Martyrs and others living with Christ are to be venerated by the faithful, through which many benefits are afforded from God to men ; so that the affirmers, that veneration and honour are not due to the Relics of the Saints, or that these and other sacred monuments are uselessly honoured by the faithful, or that it is vain to celebrate the memories of the Saints for the purpose of obtaining their assistance, are wholly to be condemned, as the Church long since condemned and still condemns them.

Likewise, they must teach them, that the images of Christ and of the Virgin Mother of God and of the other Saints are especially to be had and retained in Churches, and that due honour and veneration are to be paid to them ; not that any divinity or virtue, on account of which they ought to be worshipped, is believed to be inherent in them ; or that any thing is to be sought from them ; or that trust is to be placed in images, as was formerly done by the Gentiles who placed their hope in Idols ; but because the honour, which is paid to them, is referred to the originals which they represent ; so that, through the Images which we kiss and before which we uncover our heads and bow down prostrate, we adore Christ and venerate the Saints whose similitude they bear ¹.

2. Let us next, upon the doctrinal and practical system of the professedly unchangeable Church of Rome, hear the comments of some of the most approved Latin Doctors both before and after the Council of Trent.

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. xxv. p. 507, 508.

(1.) From Thomas Aquinas, who was not only a mighty Schoolman but also a canonised Saint of the Roman Church, we may clearly hope to derive the very best and most accurate instruction as to the *real* tenets of his Communion. Now this writer, through the medium of a syllogism professedly framed upon an *authorised* Prayer in the Breviary, establishes the DUTY of worshipping the cross with the self-same adoration as that which is paid to the Deity.

*We offer the supreme adoration of Latria to that Being, in whom we place our hope of salvation. But we place our hope of salvation in the cross of Christ : for the Church sings ; Hail, O cross, our only hope in this time of passion, increase righteousness to the pious, and grant pardon to the guilty. THEREFORE the cross of Christ is to be adored with the supreme adoration of Latria*¹.

(2.) Much wholesome instruction, in regard to the legitimate use of Images, may also be derived from the expository comment of James Naclantus, Bishop of Clugium.

*We must not only confess, that the faithful in the Church worship before an Image ; as some oversqueamish souls might peradventure express themselves : but we must furthermore confess, without the slightest scruple of conscience, that THEY ADORE THE VERY IMAGE ITSELF : for, in sooth, they venerate it with the identical worship wherewith they venerate its prototype. Hence, IF THEY ADORE THE PROTOTYPE WITH THAT DIVINE WORSHIP WHICH IS RENDERED TO GOD, AND WHICH TECHNICALLY BEARS THE NAME OF LATRIA, THEY ADORE ALSO THE IMAGE WITH THE SAME LATRIA OR SUPREME DIVINE WORSHIP : and, if they adore the prototype with Dulia or Hyperdulia, they are bound also to adore the Image with the self-same species of inferior worship*².

¹ S. Thom. Aquin. part.³iii. q. 25. art. 4.

² Jacob. Naclant, Clug. Expos. Epist. ad Roman. cap. 1.

(3.) In exactly the same expository strain proceeds Gabriel Biel, in his Lectures upon the Canon of the Mass.

*If there shall be Images of Christ, THEY ARE ADORED WITH THE SAME SPECIES OF ADORATION AS CHRIST HIMSELF, THAT IS, WITH THE SUPREME ADORATION CALLED Latria: if of the most blessed Virgin; with the worship of Hyperdulia*¹.

(4.) The commentary of Peter de Medrano will throw yet additional light on the subject.

*We must say, that, to our Lady the Mother of God, there has been granted the remarkable privilege of being physically and really present in some of her statues or images.—Hence we must piously believe, that in some celebrated statues or images of herself, she is inherent and present, personally, physically, and really;—in order that, in them, she may receive, from faithful worshippers, her due adoration*².

(5.) Yet still further light breaks in upon us from the statements of Aringhi, penned and published at Rome under the very nose of the sovereign Pontiff.

*This Image, translated from the city of Edessa, is at once preserved as a bulwark against mad Image-breakers, and is set forth to be taken up and ADORED by the faithful*³.

*Within these few years, under every Pope successively, some or other of our sacred Images, especially of the more ancient, have made themselves illustrious, and have acquired A PECULIAR WORSHIP AND VENERATION, by the exhibition of fresh miracles: as it is notorious to all, who dwell in this city*⁴.

(3.) Let us finally attend to the actual liturgical practice of the Romanists themselves, as the best explanation of the tenets received and inculcated by their Clergy: for, clearly, as men are taught to believe

¹ Gabriel. Biel. super Can. Miss. lect. xlix.

² Pet. de Medran. Roset. Theolog. p. 311.

³ Aring. Rom. Subt. lib. v. c. 4.

⁴ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 464.

and to act, so will their authorised public prayers be constructed.

(1.) Hail, O cross, our only hope in this time of passion: increase righteousness to the pious, and grant pardon to the guilty ¹.

(2.) Holy Mary, succour the miserable, assist the pusillanimous, comfort the mournful ².

(3.) O singular Virgin, mild among all, make us, being delivered from our sins, mild and chaste. Grant us purity of life; prepare for us a safe journey: that, seeing Jesus, we may always jointly rejoice ³.

(4.) Mary, mother of grace, mother of mercy, do thou protect us from the enemy, and receive us in the hour of death. Unloose their bonds to the guilty: give light to the blind: drive away our evils: demand all good things. Show thyself to be a mother. Let Him, who for us endured to be thy son, receive our prayers through thee ⁴.

(5.) O George, illustrious martyr, praise and glory become thee.—We beseech thee, in our inmost heart, that, with all the faithful, we may be joined to the citizens of heaven, being washed from our impurities ⁵.

(6.) O martyr Christopher, for the honour of the Saviour, make us in mind worthy of the honour of the Deity. According to the promise of Christ, for what thou askest thou obtainest, grant unto thy sorrowful people the gifts, which in dying thou besoughtest ⁶.

(7.) O ye eleven thousand glorious girls, lilies of virginity, roses of martyrdom, defend me in life by granting me your assistance: and show yourselves in death, by bringing the last comfort ⁷.

(8.) O holy Mary, our sovereign queen, as God the Father, by his omnipotence, has made thee most powerful; so assist us, at the hour of death, by de-

¹ Breviar. Rom. Hebdom. 4. Quadrag. die sabbat.

² Collect. in Hor. ad usum Sarum. fol. 30.

³ Ibid. fol. 33.

⁴ Offic. parv. beat. Mar. p. 127.

⁵ Collect. in Hor. ad usum Sarum. fol. 77.

⁶ Ibid. fol. 77.

⁷ Ibid. fol. 80.

fending us against all power that is contrary to thine.
Hail Mary! O holy Mary, our sovereign queen, as God the Son has endowed thee with so much knowledge and charity that it enlightens all heaven; so, in the hour of death, illustrate and strengthen our souls with the knowledge of the true faith, that they may not be perverted by error or pernicious ignorance,
Hail Mary! O holy Virgin, our sovereign queen, as the Holy Ghost has plentifully poured forth into thee the love of God; so instil into us, at the hour of death, the sweetness of divine love, that all bitterness at that time may become acceptable and pleasant to us.
*Hail Mary!*¹

(9.) Hail Mary, lady and mistress of the world, to whom all power has been given both in heaven and in earth²!

II. After this ample statement of the doctrine and practice of the Roman Church, it will be useful for us to observe, both *negatively* what the Bible *does not* say, and *positively* what the Bible *does* say, on the subject now before us.

1. In the first place, then, so far as respects the *negative* part of the question, the Bible is **TOTALLY SILENT**, as to the Trent-inculcated duty, of invoking Saints, venerating Relics, and kissing and uncovering the head and falling prostrate before images either in niches or upon crucifixes.

It **NO WHERE** recognises or recommends any such practices and notions: as those, of invoking dead Saints, to aid us by their prayers, or to grant us purity of life, or to unloose the bands of the guilty, or to make us mild and chaste, or to defend us in life, or to assist us in the hour of death; of celebrating their memories, for the avowed purpose of obtaining their

¹ The devotion of the sacred heart of Jesus, including the Devotion to the sacred heart of the blessed Virgin Mary; with an Appendix and the indult of Pope Pius VII. in favour of it; for the use of the mid-land district. Edit. 12. p. 212, 213. Keating and Brown, 1821.

² Ibid. p. 206. See also p. 293.

help and protection ; of much benefit being derived, from God to man by the veneration of Relics ; of worshipping Christ and venerating the Saints, through the medium of worship and veneration paid relatively to Images ; of beseeching the cross, a mere dumb piece of wood, even if any of its remains should now be actually in existence, to increase righteousness to the pious and to grant pardon to the guilty.

From beginning to end, NOT A SYLLABLE of sanction or approbation, in regard to any such phantasies can we discover in the Holy Scriptures.

Hence, even to say the very least of the matter, the doctrine, avowedly taught and liturgically introduced by the Church of Rome, has not the slightest support or warrant from the Written Word of God. Whatever be the ground, upon which it rests ; at all events, it clearly rests *not* upon the Bible.

3. But this is not all. For, in the second place, so far as respects the *positive* part of the question, Holy Scripture is full and express AGAINST any worship or invocation of the creature, however disguised or modified or palliated by the closely harmonizing distinctions and definitions of Paganism and Popery ; inasmuch as the Pagans, though slanderously misrepresented by the doctors of the Council of Trent, did in truth defend their Idol-worship against the primitive Christians, on the self-same plea and principle of *relative adoration*, as the said doctors themselves and their followers the Romish Clergy defend their Image-worship against us reformed Catholics¹.

(1.) *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven*

¹ You pagans allege, says Arnobius, that YOU WORSHIP THE GODS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF IMAGES—You tell us, that THEY RECEIVE YOUR PRAYERS THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF A SORT OF GO-BETWEENS. Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. vi. p. 195. We do not fear the images themselves, the pagans tell us, says Lactantius ; but those beings, after whose similitude they are fashioned, and by whose names they are consecrated. Lactant. Divin. Instit. lib. ii. § 2. p. 141.

above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments¹.

(2.) Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsmān².

(3.) They, that make a graven image, are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed³.

(4.) None considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree⁴?

(5.) What profiteth the graven image, that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols? Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach. Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it⁵.

(6.) Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve⁶.

(7.) Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, in-

¹ Exod. xx. 4—6.

² Deut. xxvii. 15.

³ Isa. xlv. 9. See also Psalm cxxxv. 15—18.

⁴ Isa. xlv. 19.

⁵ Habak. ii. 18, 19.

⁶ Matt. iv. 10.

*truding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind*¹.

(8.) *When I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book. Worship God*².

(9.) *When the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn away from these vanities unto the living God*³.

III. We may now profitably hear the testimony of the early ecclesiastical writers.

1. The Epistle of the Church of Smyrna, relative to the martyrdom of Polycarp, was written about the middle of the second century.

Nicetas was urged by the envious and the wicked to intercede with the governor, that the remains of Polycarp should not be delivered for sepulture: lest, leaving him that was crucified, the Christians, it was suggested, should begin to worship this person. These things they said, at the instigation of the Jews; because they were ignorant, that neither can we ever forsake Christ who suffered for the salvation of the saved throughout the whole world, nor that

¹ Coloss. ii. 18.

² Rev. xxii. 8, 9.

³ Acts xiv. 11—15.

we can ever worship any other. For him, being the Son of God, we adore: but the martyrs, as disciples and imitators of the Lord, we worthily love on account of their special affection to their own King and Master¹.

2. Clement of Alexandria flourished in the second century.

(1.) Images, wrought by mean artizans, are produced from worthless materials. Therefore, they themselves must be worthless and profane².

(2.) An image, truly, is mere dead matter, fashioned by the hand of the artizan. But, with us Christians, there is no sensible representation formed out of sensible matter. God, the alone true God, is our intellectual image³.

3. Minucius Felix lived in the third century.

(1.) Why have the Christians no altars, no temples, no known images⁴?

(2.) We neither worship crosses nor wish for them⁵.

4. Origen lived in the third century.

(1.) Celsus remarks, that we have neither altars nor images nor temples.—We ought not to dedicate images constructed by the ingenuity of artizans⁶.

(2.) We deem those the most ignorant, who are not ashamed to address lifeless images, to petition the weak for health, to ask life from the dead, to pray for wealth from the needy. And, though some may allege, that these images are not gods, but only their symbols and representations; yet even such persons, fancying that imitations of the Deity can be made by the hands of some mean artizan, are not a whit less ignorant and slavish and uninstructed. From this sottish stupidity, the very lowest and least informed of us Christians are exempt⁷.

¹ Epist. Eccles. Smyrn. § 17, 18.

² Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vii. Oper. p. 714.

³ Clem. Alex. Admon. ad Gent. Oper. p. 34.

⁴ Minuc. Fel. Octav. p. 91.

⁵ Orig. cont. Cels. lib. viii. p. 389.

⁶ Ibid. p. 284.

⁷ Ibid. lib. vi. p. 284.

5. The Council of Elvira 'sat at the beginning of the fourth century.

It hath seemed good to us, that pictures ought not to be admitted into a church: lest that should be painted upon walls which is worshipped and adored¹.

6. Athanasius flourished in the fourth century.

We are truly worshippers of God: because we invoke no one of the creatures, nor any mere man, but the Son who is by nature from God and true God².

7. Augustine lived in the fourth and fifth centuries.

(1.) Let not our point of religion be the worship of dead men. For though they lived piously; still they are not to be accounted of, as requiring from us any such honours: but they rather wish us to worship him through whose illumination they rejoice that we should be partakers of their merit. They are to be honoured therefore on account of imitation; not to be prayed to on account of religion³.

(2.) I have known that many are adorers of sepulchres and of pictures:—but the church herself condemns them, and as bad children studies to correct them⁴.

8. Epiphanius flourished in the fourth century.

Let Mary be held in honour: but let the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost be worshipped. As for Mary, let no one worship her⁵.

IV. Once more, let the honest inquirer freely judge and determine for himself, whether the doctrine and practice of the Roman Church and Clergy, relative to Saints and Images and Relics and Crosses, be supported either by Holy Scripture or by Primitive Antiquity.

¹ Concil. Elib. can. xxxvi.

² Athan. cont. Arian. Orat. iv. Oper. vol. i. p. 275.

³ August. de ver. relig. c. lv. Oper. vol. i. p. 317.

⁴ August. de morib. Eccles. Cathol. lib. i. c. 34.

⁵ Epiphan. cont. Hær. lib. iii. tom. ii. hær. 79.

CHAPTER VII.

PAPAL SUPREMACY.

THE doctrine of Papal Supremacy shall next be brought to the legitimate test of Scripture and Historical Evidence.

I. We find the claim of this supremacy authoritatively propounded in manner following.

1. *The Roman Church is the mother and mistress of all other Churches*¹.

2. *I acknowledge the holy catholic and apostolic Roman Church to be the mother and mistress of all Churches: and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman Pontiff, the successor of the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and the Vicar of Jesus Christ*².

II. Such, in form, is the claim: but where find we its substantiation in the Bible?

1. The Roman Church had indisputably been founded in the apostolic age: for one of St. Paul's Epistles is addressed to it.

YET NOT A SINGLE SYLLABLE is said in Scripture, either prophetic or declarative, respecting *the divine appointment*, and consequently *the divine right*, of the Papal Supremacy.

WE NOWHERE read in Holy Writ, either that *the Roman Church ought justly to be obeyed, as the mother and mistress of all other Churches*; or that *the Pope is, at once, the successor of the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and the Vicar of Jesus Christ*. *

From whatever quarter the divines of Trent have made these discoveries; it is quite clear, that the Bible throws no light upon the present subject.

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. vii. p. 87. sess. xiv. c. 3. p. 162. sess. xxii. c. 8. p. 243.

² Profess. Fid. Trident. in syllog. Confess. p. 5.

2. The Romish Clergy, however, assure us, that the primacy or monarchy of the entire Catholic Church was, in the following express terms, granted to St. Peter by Christ himself.

*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*¹.

Now, whether our Lord did or did not grant the monarchy of the Church to Peter; respecting which monarchy, by the way, neither claim nor trace can be found in any part of the New Testament: the *true* question, I apprehend, touches not *Peter*, but *the Pope*. In other words, it matters little to the point before us, whether *Peter* was or was not divinely appointed the monarch of the Church; unless it can *also* be proved, that *the Pope* is the lawfully and divinely constituted successor to all Peter's alleged regalities.

Where, then, is the scriptural demonstration of the Pope's hereditary successorship to the asserted special privileges and authority of St. Peter? In other words, where have we any proof from the Bible, that *the Roman Pontiff*, as the oath in the Tridentine Profession of Faith determines, *is, at once, the Successor of the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and the Vicar of Jesus Christ*?

Truly, the Bible, though we painfully search it through from beginning to end, SAYS NOT ONE WORD about the matter.

III. But, where the Bible is so provokingly silent, peradventure the earliest Fathers, in delivering their testimony, may be somewhat more communicative.

To establish the Pope's *claim* of rightful successorship to St. Peter, we must obviously establish the

¹ Matt. xvi. 18, 19.

FACT that *St. Peter was the first diocesan Bishop of Rome*. For, since, so far as *foundership* is concerned, St. Peter founded *many Churches*: the mere circumstance, even if the circumstance were ever so well established, of his having *founded* the Roman Church, would no more constitute *the Roman Bishop* heir to his regalities, than the same circumstance would convey the same privilege to *the Bishop of any other Church* similarly founded by St. Peter. Whence it is quite clear, that, in no method, save that of *the regular succession of one diocesan Bishop to another diocesan Bishop in the same episcopal See, each Bishop inheriting the duly transmitted authority of his predecessor*, can any intelligible case be made out for the Pope's alleged successorship to Peter in the pretended office of Christ's supreme Vicar.

Accordingly, as the Romish Clergy well know and confess, this precise matter is the very hinge, upon which turns the whole of the present question.

WAS, OR WAS NOT, THE APOSTLE PETER THE FIRST DIOCESAN BISHOP OF THE ROMAN CHURCH?

We have here before us a simple question of FACT: and doubtless, like every other simple question of FACT, it must be determined by historical testimony.

1. *Negatively*, then, we may safely say, that the alleged fact of *Peter's diocesan Roman Episcopate* is altogether incapable of substantiation through the medium of evidence.

Not a single writer of the three first centuries gives the slightest intimation, that *Peter was the first diocesan Bishop of Rome*.

But, if the alleged fact cannot be established from the writers of the three *earliest* centuries, it is obvious in the meanest capacity, that it can never be established from the interested fictions of a *later* period.

2. We may, however, advance beyond *negativeness*; though even *that* were amply sufficient; for

no man can be justly required to admit an alleged fact, without so much as a shadow of historical substantiation. *Positively*, we can say, that, in the writers of the three first ages, not only is there no testimony to be found for the asserted fact of *Peter's diocesan Roman Episcopate*, but we are absolutely encountered with direct testimony *against* it.

(1.) Irenæus of Lyons, who lived from the latter end of the first century to the latter end of the second, distinctly attests, that *the Church of Rome was JOINTLY founded by the TWO Apostles Peter and Paul*; and that, *When the TWO Apostles had thus JOINTLY founded it, they JOINTLY delivered the Episcopate of their newly founded Society to Linus*. Accordingly, in strict agreement with this account of the transaction, Irenæus places Linus the FIRST in his list of the twelve successive Roman Bishops, who governed that Church, from the time of its original joint foundation by Peter and Paul, down to the year 175, when he published his Work against Heresies¹.

Now such an account is plainly incompatible with the pretended fact, that *Peter was the first diocesan Bishop of Rome*. For the account states, that *Peter and Paul, having jointly founded the Roman Church, committed the episcopate of it to Linus*. Whence it clearly follows, that the first diocesan Bishop of Rome was *Linus*, not *Peter*.

(2.) The evidence of Irenæus is directly confirmed by the ancient author of the Apostolical Constitutions.

He gives us a list of the primitive apostolically ordained Bishops: and, in the course of it, he unequivocally states, even in so many words, that *Linus was consecrated the FIRST Bishop of the Roman Church*; adding what is not unworthy the attention of the Latin Clergy, that Linus was so consecrated the FIRST Roman Bishop, not by Peter but by Paul².

¹ Iren. adv. Hær. lib. iii. c. 3. p. 170, 171.

² Constit. Apost. lib. vii. c. 46.

IV. On the grounds now stated, many persons will incline to rest, either partially or wholly, in the strongly expressed judgment of the learned Scaliger :

As for the coming of Peter to Rome, HIS ROMAN EPISCOPATE OF TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, and his final martyrdom at Rome, no man, whose head can boast a grain of common sense, will believe a single syllable¹.

CHAPTER VIII.

REMARKABLE ACKNOWLEDGMENTS MADE BY THE ROMISH CLERGY.

So far as respects the *evidence* upon which stands the alleged apostolicity of the peculiar doctrines and practices of Romanism, it will now be useful to hear the various acknowledgments which have been made by the Latin Clergy themselves.

I. Let us begin with that cherished dogma of the Roman Church, the tenet of Transubstantiation.

1. On this point, the theologians of Trent assure us, that *the words of Christ, as recorded by the Evangelists, SO PLAINLY AND SO DISTINCTLY propound the doctrine of Transubstantiation, that, on the part of wicked and contentious Protestants, it is both a burning shame and a crying sin to interpret them figuratively².*

2. Yet the great schoolmen, Johannes Scotus, Biel, Occam, Peter ab Alliaco, Cardinal-Archbishop of Cambray, Cardinal Cajetan, and Cardinal Fisher of Rochester, have all declared, that *the doctrine of Transubstantiation is INCAPABLE OF PROOF from Scripture: that the doctrine of the bread and wine remaining substantially unchanged is LESS REPUGNANT to Scripture, than the doctrine of their transubstantiation into the body and blood of Christ; and,*

¹ Scalig. in Joan. xviii. 31.

² Concil. Trident. sess. xiii. cap. 1. p. 123.

consequently, that *the doctrine of Transubstantiation CANNOT BE DEMONSTRATED from the institutive words of Christ, unless to such words the authoritative decision of the Roman Church be superadded*¹.

II. Let us next pass to the dogma of Purgatory.

1. The divines of Trent profess to have received the doctrine of Purgatory, both from *the declaration of SCRIPTURE, and from the ancient tradition of THE FATHERS*².

2. Yet Bishop Trevern confesses, that *JESUS CHRIST has not revealed to us the knowledge of Purgatory*³. Cardinal Fisher admits, that, *among THE ANCIENTS, there was either no mention or very rare mention of Purgatory, that Purgatory was but lately known and received by the Catholic Church, and that to this day the Greeks believe not in its existence*⁴. Father Barns tells us, that *Punishment in Purgatory is a doctrine seated in human opinion, that neither from SCRIPTURE nor from THE FATHERS nor from THE EARLIER COUNCILS can it be firmly deduced, and that the contrary opinion seems more conformable to them*⁵; and Petrus Picherellus drily enough remarks,⁶ *that in SCRIPTURE there is no fuel to be found, either to kindle or to maintain the fire of Purgatory*⁶.

III. We may next turn our attention to Image-worship and Saint-worship.

1. The doctors of the Council of Trent declare, *that according to the use of the Catholic and Apostolic Church RECEIVED IN THE PRIMEVAL TIMES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, the invocation of dead*

¹ Johan. Scot. in 4 sent. dist. xi. q. 3. Biel. in Can. Miss. lect. 40. Occam. Centil. lib. iv. q. 6. et in 4 sent. dist. xi. q. 6. Petr. ab. Alliac. Camerac. in 4 sent. dist. xi. q. 6. art. 1, 2. Cajet. in Th. p. 3. q. lxxv. art. 1. q. xlv. art. 14. Fisher. Roffens. cont. Luther. de capt. Babil. c. 1.

² Concil. Trident. sess. xxv. p. 505, 506.

³ Trevern's Discuss. Amic. vol. ii. p. 242.

⁴ Fisher, Roffens. cont. Luther. art. xviii. Oper. p. 496.

⁵ Barn. Catholico-Rom. Pacif. sect. ix. litt. D. ad fin. Paralip.

⁶ Picherell. de Miss. c. ii. p. 150.

*Saints, the veneration of Relics, and the kissing and falling down before graven or molten Images, ought by the Clergy to be diligently inculcated upon the Laity*¹.

2. Yet the learned Jesuit Petavius roundly pronounces it to be a matter of absolute certainty, that IN THE FIRST AGES OF THE CHURCH, *Images of Christ were not substituted in the place of pagan Idols, nor proposed to the veneration of the faithful*²: while Cardinal Perron tells us, that *no traces of the practice of invoking the Saints can be found IN THE AUTHORS, WHO LIVED NEAREST TO THE TIMES OF THE APOSTLES*³.

IV. Let us next advert to the high authority ascribed by the Romish Clergy to those Councils which are styled *Ecumenical* or *General*.

1. These Ecumenical Councils with the Pope at their head are believed by the Romanists to be, like the Divinity himself, *infallible and incapable of error*.

2. Yet the learned Albert Pighius scruples not to assert, that *General Councils are, not of divine, but of merely human, institution; that they originate only from a dictate of right reason, because doubtful matters may be better debated by many than by few, more especially when the many are prudent and experienced persons; that in the canonical Scriptures there is not a word about General Councils, nor from the institution of the Apostles did the primitive Church of Christ receive anything special respecting them; and that from theological grounds it is impossible to demonstrate that the whole Church ought to be represented by a General Council*⁴.

V. Pass we next to the evidence upon which *all* the manifold peculiarities of Romanism claim to repose.

¹ Concil. Trident. sess xxv. p. 507.

² Petav. Dogmat. Theol. lib. xv. c. 13. n. 3.

³ See Stillingfleet's Rational Account of the Grounds of Protest. Relig. part. iii. chap. 3. § 19. p. 590.

⁴ Albert. Pigh. Hierarch. Eccles. lib. vi. c. 1. 4.

1. The members of the Council of Trent declare, that, *in settling and defining the doctrines and practices of their Church, they follow the UNANIMOUS CONSENT AND TESTIMONY of the holy Fathers*¹.

2. Yet a modern Romish Doctor, Mr. Husenbeth, has been driven to confess, that *although the Latin Clergy OUGHT to be able to trace every point of what he calls Catholic Faith up to the Apostles, they, in truth, CANNOT trace their peculiarities up to the Apostles THROUGH THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS OF THE THREE FIRST CENTURIES*².

IV. How persons, who make such acknowledgments, can still have adhered to the communion of the Church of Rome, I pretend not to comprehend, and therefore cannot explain.

Suffice it to say, that the acknowledgments *have* been made, and that the individuals have nevertheless most unaccountably maintained and defended their unsubstantiated and confessedly unsubstantiable peculiarities.

CHAPTER IX.

EXTRAORDINARY THEOLOGICAL PRACTICES OF THE ROMISH CLERGY.

REMARKABLE as are the acknowledgments made by the Romish Clergy, their theological practices will

¹ Concil. Trident. sess. v. p. 12, 13. sess. xxiii. c. 3. p. 280.

² Pamph. p. 9, 10. For a full account of this fatal, though very true acknowledgment, extorted from Mr. Husenbeth by my repeated demand of distinct evidence from the writers of the three first centuries, see my Difficulties of Roman. book i. chap. 7. 2d. edit. The futile attempts of Bp. Trevern and Mr. Berington to bring, from the same early period, a shadow of testimony to their peculiarities, are, in the same Work, exposed and exploded. Should any of Mr. Husenbeth's clerical brethren refuse to be bound by his confession, let them, if they can, come forward and trace their doctrines up to the Apostles through the successive writings of the Fathers of the three first centuries.

be found not less worthy the attention of the honest and conscientious inquirer.

I. The general PRINCIPLE, on which these practices are constructed, is very clearly and distinctly laid down by the Professors of Douay. '.

In managing the old catholic writers, when 'in disputation opposed to us by our adversaries, say they, we endure very many errors. Sometimes we extenuate them; sometimes we excuse them: very frequently, having devised some plausible comment, we even roundly deny them altogether, affixing to them some convenient sense ¹.

II. Such is the avowed PRINCIPLE of these ingenious divines, through the medium of which, when reduced to practice, a troublesome old author, whose claim to catholicity cannot be quite decently denied, by dint of judicious explaining and managing and correcting and garbling and interpolating, may be compelled, either apparently to uphold, or at least not to contradict, the peculiarities advocated by the Romish Clergy.

Let us now, descending to particulars, mark how the PRINCIPLE is reduced to PRACTICE.

1. The first specimen, which I shall give, is that afforded by the Douay Doctors themselves, and afterwards very greatly improved upon by the dexterous Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux.

Bertram of Corby, always admitted to be an orthodox catholic divine, had written, in the ninth century, a book on the Eucharist; which, in its natural construction, is plainly fatal to the doctrine of Transubstantiation ².

Whereupon, the Professors of Douay state, that Bertram's book, when *emendated*, may be tolerated: observing with perfect truth, that since they had kindly done the good office of *emendation* for sundry

¹ Ind. Expurg. Belg. p. 54. For the original Latin, see Diff. of Rom. p. 346. 2d. edit.

² See above, chap. ii. § III. 18.

other ancient catholic writers, no imaginable reason could be assigned, why Bertram, in all equity, should not deserve and receive *the same diligent recognition*¹.

Numerous copies of the Work, however,* escaped the ambiguous benefit of the Douay *emendation*. Bossuet, therefore, as in such cases the Professors wisely direct, finally judged it best to affix to Bertram's undeniable phraseology *some convenient sense*. Hence, in settling the merits of the eucharistic controversy between Paschase and Bertram, the Bishop of Meaux compendiously assures us, that these two champions, with their respective followers, were all alike staunch Transubstantialists, though they unfortunately differed as to the best mode of expressing and propounding their common favourite doctrine².

Another specimen occurs in the remarkable case of Elfric's Epistle to Wulfstane, written about the close of the tenth century.

The original Saxon, luckily preserved in the library of Exeter Cathedral, contains a passage flat against Transubstantiation.

*Nevertheless, this sacrifice is, NOT the same body of his wherein He suffered for us, NOR the same blood which He shed for us : but, SPIRITUALLY, it is made his body and blood ; AS was that manna which rained from heaven, and AS was that water which did flow out of the rock*³.

Yet in the Latin translation of the Epistle contained in the library of Worcester Cathedral, this passage, the decisive strength of which was evidently felt and tacitly acknowledged, has been carefully *erased*⁴.

¹ Ind. Expurg. Belg. p. 54.

² Hist. des Variat. livr. iv. § 32.

³ Elfric has plainly borrowed both the turn and the sentiment of the present erased passage from Augustine. See above, chap. ii. § III. 9. (3.)

⁴ See Soames's Hist. of the Reform. vol. iii. p. 165, 166; and Stewart's Protest Layman, p. 322, 323, 324.

3. The treatment of the writings of Theodoret will afford us yet a third specimen.

This Father, who lived in the fifth century, had expressed himself so strongly against the doctrine now denominated *Transubstantiation*, that John Clement, perceiving the force of his testimony, and losing his own temper, tore out and burned the guilty leaf which contained the passage ¹.

Now such a summary process might *emendate* John Clement's individual copy of Theodoret: but, unluckily, other copies were abroad in the world. What, then, was to be done? Why, truly, as the Douay Doctors advise in such cases, *a commodious sense*, by dint of *excogitating a comment*, must be affixed to the noxious passage.

Theodoret, avowedly opposing the phantasy of Transubstantiation, had written, concerning the eucharistic bread and wine *after* consecration, that *they remain in their former SUBSTANCE and shape and appearance* ².

But three modern Roman Doctors, Mr. Berington, Bp. Trevern of Strasbourg, and Mr. Husenbeth, *excogitating a more commodious sense*, which never occurred to John Clement, make Theodoret say, in despite both of Greek grammar and clear context, that the consecrated bread and wine *remain in the shape and form of the former SUBSTANCE* ³.

Now this translation, as every schoolboy who reads the original Greek will at once perceive, is *grammatically impossible*. But let that original be withheld from the gaze of the curious; and ten to one but the *commodious sense* will pass muster among the Romish Laity, nay even among some of the Protestant Laity, without any further difficulty.

¹ Bp. Taylor's *Dissuasive from Popery*, chap. i. sect. 1.

² See above, chap. ii. § III. 10. (2.)

³ Berington's *Faith of Cathol.* p. 240. Trevern's *Ans. to Diffic. of Roman.* p. 270. Husenbeth's *Reply to Supplem.* p. 243.

4. A fourth specimen is yet again afforded by the liberality of the same Bp. Trevern of Strasbourg.

Speaking of a *moral*, not of a *literal* or *substantial*, change in the consecrated elements, as they themselves distinctly assure us in the way of explaining their own language, the old Fathers often say, that *the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ*.

But Bp. Trevern, by deliberately, in more than a single instance, *interpolating* the decisive word SUBSTANCE, while from the eyes of his readers he carefully withholds the originals, makes them speak, not their own sentiments, but those of the Church and Clergy of Rome.

Thus, when Cyril of Jerusalem writes, *Whatever the Holy Spirit hath touched, that thing is sanctified and changed*: Bp. Trevern forces him to say, *All that, which has received the impression of the Holy Spirit, is sanctified and changed INTO ANOTHER SUBSTANCE*¹.

And thus, when the old author of the Treatise on the Sacraments in the works of Ambrose writes, *They are changed into other*: Bp. Trevern remorselessly compels him to say, *They pass into another SUBSTANCE*².

5. For our fifth specimen we are indebted jointly to Bp. Trevern and Mr. Berington.

Cyprian speaks of men being *cleansed for sins through the suffering of long pain*, and of their being *long purged in fire*³.

These expressions, as the whole context shows, and as it was rightly observed by the honest Romish commentator Rigaltius, relate simply to the allegorical fire of penitential austerities in *this* world: a fire, in which, by the early discipline of the Church, it was

¹ Cyril. Hieros. Catech. Myst. v. p. 242. Discuss. Amic. vol. ii. p. 87.

² Tract. de Sacram. lib. iv. c. 4. Discuss. Amic. vol. ii. p. 92.

³ Cyprian. Epist. lv. vol. ii. p. 109, 110.

required, that the lapsed should for an appointed season be exercised.

But Bp. Trevern and Mr. Berington, wholly suppressing the context, and saying not a single syllable about their respectable fellow-religionist Rigaltius, gravely adduce the passage as proof positive, that *Cyprian in the middle of the third century, held and taught the existence of a Purgatory after death in the next world*¹.

6. Our sixth specimen is afforded by Mr. Husenbeth.

The famous text in the Gospel of St. Matthew, which exhibits our Lord as saying, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church*, is universally explained by the Romish Clergy, as being a grant from Christ of a monarchical supremacy in the Catholic Church, both to Peter individually, and to Peter's alleged heirs and successors the Bishops of Rome.

Now, most unluckily for this current explanation, the primitive theologians knew nothing of it: for, while the early Fathers, Justin and Tertullian and Cyprian and Origen and Athanasius and Jerome and Augustine and Chrysostom and Hilary, differ as to the true meaning of the text (some supposing the rock to be Peter personally and exclusively; some, to be Christ Himself; and some, to be Peter's confession of Christ's divinity); NOT ONE of them interprets it, as the Romish Clergy would now interpret it.

Yet, by way of putting to open shame every opponent of the Pope's supremacy by divine right, Mr. Husenbeth deliberately assures his plain country readers, that, *by ALL the holy Fathers and Doctors, by ALL the Councils, and by the most learned and pious men in the world in EVERY age down to the Reformation, the text in question has been UNI-*

¹ Berington's Faith of Cathol. p. 355. Trevern's Discuss. Amic. vol. ii. p. 243.

FORMLY understood as it is now explained by the *Romish Clergy*¹.

7. The copiousness of Mr. Husenbeth will afford us also yet a seventh specimen.

With every semblance of even scrupulous fidelity, giving distinct references to his authorities, this theologian, in a small Work written for circulation among *the unlearned*, declares, that *Papias, Ignatius, Irenæus, Dionysius of Corinth, Caius of Rome, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian, all with one voice explicitly assert St. Peter to have been the first diocesan Bishop of Rome*: and he adds, still for the information of *the unlearned*, that *Mr. White*, who had unceremoniously pronounced St. Peter's Roman Episcopate to be an idle and ungrounded report, *did but attempt to impose upon such humble readers as have no means of examining history, by such worn-out fallacies and vile fabrications*².

Yet I have myself examined all Mr. Husenbeth's references to his above alleged witnesses from the three first centuries: and I can positively state, from the testimony of my own eye-sight, that, *NOT ONE of those witnesses says a single syllable, as to St. Peter having been the first diocesan Bishop of Rome, or indeed as to his EVER having been Bishop of that See*.

8. Our eighth specimen is furnished by the joint industry and rival intrepidity of Bp. Trevern and Mr. Husenbeth.

For the purpose of persuading the unwary, that *the highest divine adoration of the consecrated bread and wine had been the practice of the Church from the earliest ages*, Bp. Trevern adduces a direction or rubric from the ancient Clementine Liturgy; and,

¹ Husenbeth's Defence of the Creed and Discip. of the Cath. Church, chap. iii. p. 69.

² Husenbeth's Defence of Creed, chap. ii. p. 41, 42.

after him, Mr. Husenbeth eagerly catches up, for the same purpose, the same ancient rubric or direction¹.

Meanwhile the direction itself in its *genuine* state, says not a syllable respecting *any* adoration of the consecrated bread and wine. Bp. Trevern first *interpolates* it, to make it serve his purpose: and then Mr. Husenbeth brings forward, *as evidence*, the precise words of the Gallican prelate's *interpolation*, wedged into an utterly false construction of the original passage².

9. Our ninth and last specimen is of a somewhat wholesale nature: whence it will the more completely exemplify the PRINCIPLE, laid down, for the better furtherance of truth, by the painful Professors of Douay.

The King of Spain (I avail myself of the diligent researches of our own excellent Bishop Jeremy Taylor) gave a commission to the Inquisitors, to *purge* all catholic authors: but with this special clause; that *they should keep private among themselves the expurgatory index, neither communicating it to others, nor giving a copy of it to any one.*

It happened, however, by the Divine Providence so ordering it, that, about thirteen years after, a copy of it was procured and published by Johannes Pappus and Franciscus Junius. This circumstance compelled the Inquisitors to acknowledge their expurgatory index, and they have since printed it themselves.

(1.) Let us now observe some few of the exploits of *emendation*, achieved by these honest and laborious correctors of erring Antiquity.

In Chrysostom's Works printed at Basil, the words, *There is no merit, but what is given us by Christ*, are commanded to be expunged. Yet these very

¹ Trevern's *Discuss. Amic.* vol. i. p. 407. Trevern's *Ans. to Diff. of Rom.* p. 302. Husenbeth's *Reply to Supplem.* p. 273.

² See my *Diffic. of Roman.* p. 526—529. 2d. edit.

words occur in his first Homily upon the text of St. John, *Ye are my friends.*

A similar erasure is enjoined of the clause, *The Church is built, not upon the man, but upon the faith.* Yet this clause occurs in his sermon on Pentecost.

The same *expurgatory process* has been undergone by Chrysostom in many other places: and Ambrose and Augustine and the rest of the old Fathers have been subjected to the like necessary *emendations.* •

In short, the *curtailments* of the ancient writers were carried to so great an extent, that Ludovicus Saurius, the corrector of the press at Lyons, showed and complained of them to Junius: lamenting, that he was forced to cancel and erase many sayings of Ambrose in that edition of his Works which was printed at Lyons in the year 1559.

(2.) Not content with thus *emendating* the Fathers, our pains-taking Inquisitors, in order that their editions might throughout be perfectly harmonious and consistent, fell doggedly to work upon the very tables or indexes, which contained any references to the expunged passages: for of course it were unseemly, that a reference should appear, indicating the occurrence of a place which *itself* could no where be found in an improved or expurgated edition.

Thus out of one of Froben's indexes, they have directed the erasure of the following references: *The use of images forbidden; The Eucharist no sacrifice, but the commemoration of a sacrifice; Works, although they do not justify, yet are necessary to salvation; Marriage is granted to all that will not contain; Venial sins damn; The dead Saints, after this life, cannot help us.*

And thus out of the index of Augustine's Works by Claudius Chevallonius at Paris in the year 1531, they have commanded a still more extraordinary erasure of a reference: *Dele, Solus Deus adorandus;*

that is, *Blot out the words, God alone is to be adored*¹.

(3.) On such disgraceful practices, Bp. Taylor well remarks: *These instances may serve, instead of multitudes which might be brought, of their corrupting the witnesses and razing the records of antiquity, that the errors and novelties of the Church of Rome might not be so easily reprov'd. Now, if the Fathers were not against them, what need these arts? Why should they use them thus? Their own expurgatory indices are infinite testimony against them, both that they do so, and that they need it*².

III. It were easy to have multiplied specimens of the same description: but these, I apprehend, may well suffice.

Respecting such a topic, any observations of my own are quite superfluous. By some marvellous perversion of the moral sense, Sixtus Senensis, indeed, has even *lauded* Pope Pius V. because he had taken diligent care, that the writings of all catholic authors, and more especially the writings of the ancient Fathers, should be *expurgated and emaculated*: but the plain good sense of every upright and honourable man will deem such praise no very flattering compliment³.

Yet, though I shall not weary the prudent inquirer with any needless remarks of my own, either on the Douay Principle itself, or on the reduction of that principle to systematic practice: I may, at parting, be permitted, in all good will, to offer him a word of not altogether useless advice.

Whenever a Romish Doctor makes a large or extraordinary or startling assertion, there clearly can be *no harm* in a CAUTIOUS SUSPENSION OF BELIEF, until

¹ Index Expurg. Madr. 1612. in indice libr. expurg. p. 39.

² Bp. Taylor's *Dissuasive from Popery*, chap. i. sect. 1.

³ Sixtus Senensis, in *Epistola dedicatoria ad Pium Quintum*, laudat Pontificem in hæc verba: *Expurgari et emaculari curasti, omnium catholicorum scriptorum, ac præcipue veterum Patrum, scripta.* See Bp. Taylor's *Dissuasive from Popery*. ch. i. sect. 1.

either the inquirer himself or some competent and trust-worthy friend shall have had an opportunity of ACTUAL AND PERSONAL VERIFICATION OF ALLEGED AUTHORITIES.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

At the close of this brief manual it may perhaps be useful to state the question as it now presents itself.

I. Upon those who *assert*, rests the duty and incumbency of *proof*. Yet in regard to what by a single comprehensive word may be styled *Popery*, the question stands *negatively*, in manner following.

The peculiar doctrines and practices, which the Clergy of the Roman Church pertinaciously inculcate upon their Laity, and to which they would proselyte the unthinking and uninformed Protestant, CAN NOT BE TRACED UP TO CHRIST AND HIS INSPIRED APOSTLES, either by the evidence of God's Written Word, or by the subordinate testimony of the successive ecclesiastical writers of the three first centuries.

II. But this circumstance, bad enough even in itself, is by no means the worst part of the matter.

Scripture and the early Fathers, not only, negatively, DO NOT ESTABLISH the apostolicity of the peculiarities of Popery: but they also, positively, CONTRADICT AND CONDEMN those same peculiarities.

III. Hence, if I mistake not, the sober inquirer, who demands *proof* instead of *assertion*, will at length find himself irresistibly brought to the following very important conclusion.

IN ADMITTING THE PECULIARITIES OF THE LATIN CHURCH AS ARTICLES OF THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION, THE ROMANIST BELIEVES NOT ONLY WITHOUT EVIDENCE BUT EVEN AGAINST EVIDENCE.

THE END.

GILBERT & RIVINGTON, Printers, St. John's Square, London.

A
DISCOURSE
AGAINST
TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

— —
BY
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DISCOURSE

AGAINST

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

v.

CONCERNING the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, one of the two great positive Institutions of the Christian Religion, there are two main points of difference between *us* and the Church of *Rome*. *One* about the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*; in which they think, but are not certain, that they have the Scripture and the words of our Saviour on their side: the *other*, about the administration of this sacrament to the people in both kinds; in which we are sure that we have the Scripture and our Saviour's institution on our side, and that so plainly, that our adversaries themselves do not deny it.

Of the *first* of these I shall now treat, and endeavour to show, against the Church of *Rome*, that in *this Sacrament there is no substantial Change made of the Elements of Bread and Wine into the natural Body and Blood of Christ*; that *Body* which was born of the *Virgin Mary*, and suffered upon the Cross; for so they explain that hard word *Transubstantiation*.

Before I engage in this argument, I cannot but observe what an unreasonable task we are put upon, by the bold confidence of our adversaries, to dispute a matter of sense; which is one of those things about which *Aristotle* hath long since pronounced there ought to be no dispute.

It might well seem strange if any man should write a book, to prove that an *Egg* is not an *Elephant*, and that a *Musket-bullet* is not a *pike*: It is every whit as hard a case, to be put to maintain by a long discourse, that what we see and handle and taste to be *Bread*, is *Bread* and not the *Body of a Man*; and what we see and taste to be *Wine*, is *Wine* and not *Blood*. And if this evidence may not pass for sufficient without any farther proof, I do not see why any man, that hath confidence enough to do so, may not deny any thing to be what all the world sees it is; or affirm any thing to be what all the world sees it is not: and this without all possibility of being farther confuted. So that the business of *Transubstantiation* is not a controversy of Scripture against Scripture, or of reason, against reason, but of downright impudence against the plain meaning of Scripture, and all the sense and reason of mankind.

It is a most self-evident falsehood; and there is no doctrine or proposition in the world that is of itself more evidently true, than *Transubstantiation* is evidently false: And yet if it were possible to be true, it would be the most ill-natured and pernicious truth in the world, because it would suffer nothing else to be true: it is like the *Roman Catholic Church*, which will needs be the whole Christian Church, and will allow no other Society of Christians to be any part of it: so *Transubstantiation*, if it be true at all, it is all truth, and nothing else is true; for it cannot be true unless our senses, and the senses of all mankind be deceived about their proper objects; and if this be true and certain, then nothing else can be so; for if we be not certain of what we see, we can be certain of nothing.

And yet notwithstanding all this, there are a company of men in the world so abandoned and given up by God to the efficacy of delusion, as in good earnest to believe this gross and palpable error, and to im-
se the belief of it upon the Christian world, under

no less penalties than a temporal death and eternal damnation. And therefore, to undeceive, if possible, these deluded souls, it will be necessary to examine the pretended grounds of so false a doctrine, and to lay open the monstrous absurdity of it.

And in the handling of this argument, I shall proceed in this plain method :

I. I shall consider the pretended grounds and reasons of the Church of *Rome* for this doctrine.

II. I shall produce our *Objections* against it. And if I can show that there is no tolerable ground for it, and that there are invincible objections against it, then every man is not only in reason excused from believing this doctrine, but hath great cause to believe the contrary.

FIRST, I will consider the pretended grounds and reason of the Church of *Rome* for this doctrine. Which must be one or more of these five: Either, 1st, The Authority of Scripture. Or, 2ndly, The perpetual Belief of this Doctrine in the Christian Church, as an Evidence that they always understood and interpreted our Saviour's words, *This is my Body*, in this sense. Or, 3rdly, The Authority of the present Church to make and declare new Articles of Faith. Or, 4thly, the absolute necessity of such a change as this in the Sacrament, to the comfort and benefit of those who receive this Sacrament. Or, 5thly, To magnify the power of the Priest in being able to work so great a Miracle.

1st, They pretend for this Doctrine the authority of Scripture in those words of our Saviour, *This is my Body*. Now to show the insufficiency of this pretence, I shall endeavour to make good these two things :

1. That there is no necessity of understanding those words of our Saviour in the sense of *Transubstantiation*.

2. That there is a great deal of reason, nay, that it

is very absurd and unreasonable, not to understand them otherwise.

First, That there is no necessity to understand those words of our Saviour in the sense of *Transubstantiation*. If there be any, it must be from one of these two reasons: either because there are no figurative expressions in Scripture, which I think no man ever yet said: Or else, because a Sacrament admits of no figures; which would be very absurd for any man to say, since it is of the very nature of a Sacrament to represent and exhibit some invisible grace and benefit by an outward Sign and Figure: And especially since it cannot be denied, but that in the Institution of this very Sacrament our Saviour useth figurative expressions, and several words which cannot be taken strictly and literally. When he gave the cup, he said, *This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you and for many for the Remission of Sin*. Where first the *Cup* is put for the *Wine* contained in the *Cup*; or else, if the words be literally taken, so as to signify a substantial change, it is not of the *Wine* but of the *Cup*; and that, not into the *Blood of Christ* but into the *New Testament* or *New Covenant* in his blood. Besides, that his Blood is said *then* to be shed, and his Body to be broken, which was not till his passion, which followed the Institution and first celebration of this Sacrament.

But that there is no necessity to understand our Saviour's words in the sense of *Transubstantiation*, I will take the plain concession of a great number of the most learned writers of the Church of *Rome* in this controversy. *Bellarmino*¹, *Suarez*², and *Vasquez*³, do acknowledge *Scotus*, the great schoolman, to have said, that this Doctrine cannot be evidently proved from Scripture: and *Bellarmino* grants this not to

¹ *De Euch.* l. 3. c. 23.

² *In 3 disp.* 49. Qu. 75. Sect. 2.

³ *In 3 part disp.* 183. Qu. 76. art. 2. c. 15.

be improbable; and *Suarez* and *Vasquez* acknowledge *Durandus*¹ to have said as much. *Ocham*², another famous schoolman, says expressly, that the Doctrine which holds the Substance of the Bread and Wine to remain after Consecration, is neither repugnant to Reason nor Scripture. *Petrus ab Alliaco*³, Cardinal of Cambray, says plainly, that the Doctrine of the Substance of Bread and Wine remaining after Consecration is more easy and free from absurdity, more rational, and no ways repugnant to the authority of Scripture: nay, more, that for the other Doctrine, viz. of Transubstantiation, there is no evidence in Scripture. *Gabriel Biel*⁴, another great schoolman and Divine of their Church, freely declares, that as to any thing exprest in the Canon of the Scriptures, a man may believe that the substance of Bread and Wine doth remain after the words of Consecration: And therefore he resolves the belief of Transubstantiation into some other Revelation, besides Scripture, which he supposeth the Church had about it. Cardinal *Cajetan*⁵ confesseth that the Gospel doth no where express that the Bread is changed into the Body of Christ: that we have this from the authority of the Church: nay, he goes farther, that there is nothing in the Gospel which enforceth any man to understand those words of Christ, This is my body, in a proper and not in a metaphorical sense; but the Church having understood them in a proper sense, they are to be so explained; Which words in the Roman Edition of *Cajetan* are expunged by order of Pope *Pius V.*⁶ Cardinal *Contarenus*⁷, and *Melchior Canus*⁸, one of the best and most judicious writers that Church ever had, reckon this Doctrine among those which are not so

¹ In *Sent.* l. 4. dist. 11. Qu. 1. n. 15

² In 4 *Sent.* Qu. 5 et Quodl. 4. Qu. 3.

³ In 4 *Sent.* Qu. 6. art. 2.

⁴ In *Canon. Mess. Lect.* 40.

⁵ In *Aquin.* 3 part. Qu. 75 art. 1.

⁶ *Egid. Conic. de Sacram.* Qu. 75. art. 1. n. 13.

⁷ *De Sacram.* l. 2. c. 3.

⁸ *Loc. Theolog.* l. 3. c. 3.

expressly found in Scripture. I will add but one more of great authority in the Church, and a reputed Martyr, *Fisher*¹ Bishop of *Rocheſter*, who ingenuouſly confeſſeth that in the words of the Inſtitution *there is not one word from whence the true Preſence of the Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt in our Maſs can be proved*: So that we need not much contend that this Doctrine hath no certain foundation in Scripture, when this is ſo fully and frankly acknowledged by our adverſaries themſelves.

Secondly, If there be no neceſſity of underſtanding our Saviour's words in the ſenſe of *Transubſtantiation*, I am ſure there is a great deal of reaſon to underſtand them otherwiſe. Whether we conſider the like expreſſions in Scripture; as where our Saviour ſays he is *the Door and the true Vine* (which the Church of *Rome* would mightily have triumphed in, had it been ſaid, *This is my true body*). And ſo likewiſe where the Church is ſaid to be *Chriſt's Body*; and the *Rock* which followed the *Israelites* to be *Chriſt*, 1 Cor. x. 4. *They drank of that Rock which followed them, and that Rock was Chriſt*. All which, and innumerable more like expreſſions in Scripture, every man underſtands in a figurative, and not in a ſtrictly literal and abſurd ſenſe. And it is very well known, that in the *Hebrew* language things are commonly ſaid to be that which they do ſignify and repreſent; and there is not in that language a more proper and uſual way of expreſſing a thing to ſignify ſo and ſo, than to ſay that it is ſo and ſo. *Joseph*, expounding *Pharaoh's* dream to him, xli. 26, ſays, *the ſeven good kine are ſeven years, and the ſeven good ears of corn are ſeven years*; that is, they ſignified or repreſented ſeven years of plenty: and ſo *Pharaoh* underſtood him, and ſo would any man of ſenſe underſtand the like expreſſions: nor do I believe that any ſenſible man who had never heard

of *Transubstantiation* being grounded upon these words of our Saviour, *This is my Body*, would, upon reading the Institution of the Sacrament in the Gospel, ever have imagined any such thing to be meant by our Saviour in those words: but would have understood his meaning to have been, *this Bread signifies my Body*, *this Cup signifies my Blood*; and this which you see me now do, do ye hereafter for a *Memorial* of me: But surely it would never have entered into any man's mind, to have thought that our Saviour did literally hold himself in his hand, and give away himself for himself with his own hands.

Or whether we compare these words of our Saviour with the ancient form of the Passover used by the *Jews* from *Ezra's* time, as *Justin Martyr*¹ tells us, τοῦτο τὸ πάσχα ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ καταφυγὴ ἡμῶν, this *Passover* is our Saviour and our Refuge: Not that they believed the Paschal Lamb to be substantially changed either into God their Saviour who delivered them out of the land of *Egypt*, or into the *Messias* the Saviour whom they expected, and who was signified by it: But this Lamb which they did eat did represent to them, and put them in mind of that salvation which God wrought for their fathers in *Egypt*, when by the slaying of a lamb, and sprinkling the blood of it upon their doors, their first-born were passed over and spared; and did likewise foreshow the salvation of the *Messias*, the *Lamb of God* that was to take away the sins of the world.

And nothing is more common in all languages than to give the name of the thing signified to the sign: as the delivery of a deed or writing under hand and seal is called a conveyance, or making over such an estate, and it is really so; not the delivery of mere wax and parchment, but the conveyance of a real estate, as truly and really, to all effects and purposes of law, as if the very material houses and lands themselves could

¹ *Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 207. Edit. Paris, 1639.*

be and were actually delivered into my hands: In like manner the names of the things themselves made over to us in the new Covenant of the Gospel between God and Man, are given to the signs or seals of that Covenant. By *Baptism* Christians are said to be made *Partakers of the Holy Ghost*, Heb. vi. 4. And by the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper we are said to *communicate*, or to be made partakers of the *Body of Christ* which was broken, and of his blood which was shed for us, that is, of the real benefits of his Death and Passion. And thus St. Paul speaks of this Sacrament, 1 Cor. x. 16. *The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* But still it is bread, and he still calls it so; ver. 17. *For we being many, are one bread and one body; for we are partakers of that one bread.* The Church of Rome might, if they pleased, as well argue from hence, that all Christians are substantially changed first into bread, and then into the natural body of Christ, by their participation of this Sacrament, because they are said thereby to be *one bread and one body*. And the same apostle in the next chapter, after he had spoken of the consecration of the elements, still calls them the *bread and the cup*, in three verses together. *As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup*, ver. 26. *Whoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily*, ver. 27. *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*, ver. 28. And our Saviour himself, when he had said, *This is my blood of the New Testament*, immediately adds, *But I say unto you, I will not henceforth drink of this fruit of the vine, until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom*¹; that is, not till after his resurrection, which was the first step of his exaltation into the kingdom given him by

¹ Matt. xxvi. 29.

his Father, when the Scripture tells us he did eat and drink with his disciples. But that which I observe from our Saviour's words is, that after the consecration of the *cup*, and the delivering of it to his disciples to drink of it, he tells them that he would thenceforth drink no more of that fruit of the vine, which he had now drank with them, till after his resurrection. From whence it was plain that it was the fruit of the vine, real wine, which our Saviour drank of, and communicated to his disciples in the Sacrament.

Besides, if we consider that he celebrated this Sacrament before his Passion, it is impossible these words should be understood literally of the natural body and blood of Christ: because it was *his body broken* and *his blood shed* which he gave to his disciples, which if we understand literally of his natural body broken, and his blood shed, then these words, *This is my body which is broken, and this is my blood which is shed*, could not be true, because his body was then whole and unbroken, and his blood not then shed; nor could it be a *propitiatory sacrifice* (as they affirm this sacrament to be) unless they will say that propitiation was made before Christ suffered: and it is likewise impossible that the disciples should understand these words literally, because they not only plainly saw that what he gave them was *bread* and *wine*, but they saw likewise as plainly that it was not his body which was given, but his body which gave that which was given: not his body *broken* and his blood *shed*, because they saw him alive at that very time, and beheld his body whole and unpierced; and therefore they could not understand these words literally: if they did, can we imagine that the disciples, who upon all other occasions were so full of questions and objections, should make no difficulty of this matter? Nor so much as ask our Saviour, *how can these things be?* That they should not tell him, *We see this to be bread and that to be wine, and*

we see thy body to be distinct from both; we see thy body not broken, and thy blood not shed.

From all which it must needs be very evident, to any man that will impartially consider things, how little reason there is to understand those words of our Saviour, *This is my body and this is my blood*, in the sense of *Transubstantiation*; nay, on the contrary, that there is very great reason and an evident, necessity to understand them otherwise. I proceed to show,

2ndly, That this doctrine is not grounded upon the *perpetual belief of the Christian Church*, which the Church of *Rome* vainly pretends as an evidence that the Church did always understand and interpret our Saviour's words in this sense.

To manifest the groundlessness of this pretence, I shall, 1. Show by plain testimony of the *Fathers* in several ages, that this doctrine was not the belief of the ancient Christian Church. 2. I shall show the time and occasion of its coming in, and by what degrees it grew up and was established in the *Roman Church*. 3. I shall answer their great pretended demonstration, that this always was and must have been the constant belief of the Christian Church.

1. I shall show by plain testimonies of the *fathers* in several ages, for above five hundred years after Christ that this doctrine was not the *belief of the ancient Christian Church*. I deny not but that the *fathers* do, and that with great reason, very much magnify the wonderful mystery and efficacy of this Sacrament, and frequently speak of a great supernatural change made by the Divine benediction; which we also readily acknowledge. They say indeed, that the Elements of bread and wine do, by the Divine blessing, become to us the body and blood of Christ: but they likewise say, that the names of the things signified are given to the signs; that the bread and wine do still remain in their proper nature and substance, and that they are turned into the substance

of our bodies; that the body of Christ in the Sacrament is not his natural body, but the sign and figure of it: not that body which was crucified, nor that blood which was shed upon the cross: and that it is impious to understand the *eating of the flesh of the Son of Man* and *drinking his blood* literally: all which are directly opposite to the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, and utterly inconsistent with it. I will select but some few testimonies of many things which I might bring to this purpose.

I begin with *Justin Martyr*, who says expressly, that *our blood and flesh are nourished* by the conversion of that food which we receive in the *Eucharist*: but that cannot be the natural body and blood of Christ, for no man will say that *that* is converted into the nourishment of our bodies.

The second is *Ireneus*², who speaking of this Sacrament says, that the *bread which is from the earth, receiving the Divine invocation, is now no longer common bread, but the Eucharist* (or Sacrament) *consisting of two things, the one earthly, the other heavenly*. He says it is no longer common bread, but after invocation or consecration, it becomes the Sacrament, that is, bread sanctified, consisting of two things, an earthly and an heavenly; the earthly thing is bread, and the heavenly is the Divine blessing, which, by the invocation or consecration, is added to it. And³ elsewhere he hath this passage, *When therefore the cup that is mixed, (that is, of wine and water) and the bread that is broken receives the word of God, it becomes the Eucharist of the blood and body of Christ, of which the substance of our flesh is increased and consists*; but if that which we receive in the Sacrament do nourish our bodies, it must be bread and wine, and not the natural body and blood of Christ. There is another remarkable testimony of *Ireneus*, which though it be not now extant in those works of

¹ *Apol.* 2. p. 90. Edit. Paris, 1630.

² *Lib.* 4. c. 24.

³ *Lib.* 5. c. 31.

his which remain, yet hath been preserved by *Æcumenius*¹, and it is this: *when (says he) the Greeks had taken some servants of the Christian Catechumeni, (that is, such as had not been admitted to the Sacrament) and afterwards urged them by violence to tell them some of the secrets of the Christians, these servants having nothing to say, that might gratify those who offered violence to them, except only that they had heard from their masters, that the Divine Communion was the Blood and Body of Christ, they thinking that it was really Blood and Flesh, declared as much to those that questioned them. The Greeks taking this as if it were really done by the Christians, discovered it to others of the Greeks; who hereupon put Sanctus and Blandina to the torture to make them confess it. To whom Blandina boldly answered, How could they endure to do this, who by way of exercise (or abstinence) do not eat that flesh which may lawfully be eaten?* By which it appears that this which they would have charged upon Christians, as if they had literally eaten the flesh and blood of Christ in the Sacrament, was a false accusation which these martyrs denied, saying they were so far from that, that they for their part did not eat any flesh at all.

The next is *Tertullian*, who proves against *Marcion* the heretick, that the body of our Saviour was not a mere phantasm and appearance, but a real body, because the Sacrament is a figure and image of his body; and if there be an image of his body, he must have a real body, otherwise the Sacrament would be an image of an image. His words are these: *The bread which our Saviour took and distributed to his disciples, he made his own body, saying, This is my body, that is, the image or figure of my body. But it could not have been the figure of his body, if there had not been a true and real body*¹. And against the *Scepticks*, who denied the certainty of

¹ *Com. in 1 Pet. c. 3.*
² *Advers. Marcionem, l. 4. p. 571; Edit. Rigal. Paris. 1634.*

sense, he useth this argument: That if we question our senses, we may doubt whether our blessed Saviour were not deceived in what he heard, and saw, and touched. *He might (says he) be deceived in the voice from heaven, in the smell of the ointment with which he was anointed against his burial, and in the taste of the wine which he consecrated in remembrance of his blood*¹. So that it seems we are to trust our senses, even in the matter of the Sacrament: And if that be true, the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* is certainly false.

Origen in his Comment² on *Matt. xv.* speaking of the Sacrament, hath this passage. *That food which is sanctified by the word of God and prayer; as to that of it which is material, goeth into the belly and is cast out into the draught; which none will surely say of the body of Christ.* And afterwards he adds by way of explication, *It is not the matter of the bread, but the words which are spoken over it, which profiteth him that worthily eateth the Lord; and this (he says) he had spoken concerning the typical and symbolical body.* So that the matter of bread remaineth in the Sacrament, and this *Origen* calls the *typical* and *symbolical* body of Christ; and it is not the natural body of Christ which is there eaten; for the food eaten in the Sacrament, as to that of it which is material, goeth into the belly and is cast out into the draught. This testimony is so very plain in the cause, that *Sextus Senensis* suspects this place of *Origen* was depraved by the heretics. Cardinal *Perron* is contented to allow it to be *Origen's*, but rejects his testimony, because he was accused of heresy by some of the fathers, and says he talks like a heretic in this place. So that with much ado this testimony is yielded to us. The same father in his *Homilies*³ upon *Leviticus* speaks thus: *There is also in the New Testament a letter which kills him who doth not spiritually un-*

¹ *Lib. de Annad.* p. 319.² Edit. Huetii.³ Cap. 10.

derstand those things which are said: for if we take according to the Letter that which is said, **EXCEPT YE EAT MY FLESH AND DRINK MY BLOOD**, this Letter kills. And this also is a killing testimony, and not to be answered but in Cardinal Perron's way, by saying, *he talks like a heretic.*

St. Cyprian hath a whole *Epistle to Cocilius*¹. against those who gave the communion in water only without wine mingled with it; and his main argument against them is this, that *the blood of Christ, with which we are redeemed and quickened, cannot seem to be in the cup, when there is no wine in the cup by which the blood of Christ is represented: and afterwards he says, that contrary to the Evangelical and Apostolical doctrine, water was in some places offered (or given) in the Lord's Cup, which (says he) alone cannot express (or represent) the blood of Christ. And lastly he tells us, that by water the people is understood, by wine the blood of Christ is shown (or represented); but when in the cup water is mingled with wine, the people is united to Christ. So that according to this argument, wine in the Sacramental cup is no otherwise changed into the blood of Christ, than the water mixed with it is changed into the people, which are said to be united to Christ.*

I omit many others, and pass to St. Austin in the *fourth age* after Christ. And I the rather insist upon his testimony, because of his eminent esteem and authority in the *Latin Church*; and he also calls the elements of the Sacrament, the *figure and sign of Christ's body and blood*. In his book against *Adimantus the Manicher*, we have this expression; *Our Lord did not doubt to say, This is my body, when he gave the sign of his body*². And in his explication on the third *Psalms*, speaking of Judas, whom our Lord admitted to his last Supper, in which (says he) he commended and delivered to his disciples the figure

of his body¹; language which would now be censured for heresy in the Church of Rome. Indeed he was never accused of heresy, as Cardinal Perron says Origen was, but he talks as like one as Origen himself. And in his *Comment* on the 98th *Psal*m, speaking of the offence which the disciples took at that saying of our Saviour, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, &c.* he brings in our Saviour speaking thus to them, *Ye must understand spiritually, what I have said unto you: ye are not to eat this body which ye see, and to drink that blood which shall be shed by those that shall crucify me. I have commended a certain Sacrament to you, which being spiritually understood will give you life*². What more opposite to the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, than that the Disciples were not to eat that body of Christ which they saw, nor to drink that blood which was shed upon the cross, but that all this was to be understood spiritually and according to the nature of a Sacrament? for *that body*, he tells us, is not here but in heaven, in his comment upon these words, *Me ye have not always. He speaks*³ (says he) *of the presence of his body: ye shall have me according to my providence, according to majesty and invisible grace; but according to the flesh which the Word assumed, according to that which was born of the Virgin Mary, ye shall not have me: therefore because he conversed with his Disciples forty days, he is ascended up into heaven, and is not here.*

In his 23rd Epistle; *If the Sacrament*⁴ (says he) *had not some resemblance of those things whereof they are Sacraments, they would not be Sacraments at all: but from this resemblance they take for the most part the names of the things which they represent. Therefore as the Sacrament of the body of Christ is*

¹ Ennarate in Psal. Tom. 8. p. 16.

² Id. Tract. 50. in Jean.

³ Id. Tom. 9. p. 1105.

⁴ Id. Tom. 2. p. 93.

in some manner or sense *Christ's body*, and the *Sacrament of his blood* is the *blood of Christ*; so the *Sacrament of faith* (meaning *Baptism*) is *faith*. Upon which words of *St. Austin* there is this remarkable gloss in their own canon law¹: *The heavenly Sacrament which truly represents the flesh of Christ, is called the body of Christ: but improperly: whence it is said, that after a manner, but not according to the truth of the thing, but the mystery of the thing, signified: so that the meaning is, it is called the body of Christ, that is, it signifies the body of Christ: And if this be St. Austin's meaning, I am sure no Protestant can speak more plainly against Transubstantiation. And in the ancient canon of the mass, before it was changed in compliance with this new doctrine, it is expressly called a Sacrament, a sign, an image, and a figure of Christ's body. To which I will add that remarkable passage of St. Austin cited by Gratian², That as we receive the similitude of his death in baptism, so we may also receive the likeness of his flesh and blood, that so neither may truth be wanting in the Sacrament, nor Pagans have occasion to make us ridiculous for drinking the blood of one that was slain.*

I will mention but one testimony more of this *Father*, but so clear a one, as it is impossible any man in his wits, that had believed *Transubstantiation*, could have uttered. It is in his *Treatise de doctrinâ Christianâ*; where laying down several rules for the right understanding of Scriptures, he gives this for one. *If (says he) the speech be a precept forbidding some heinous wickedness or crime, or commanding us to do good, it is not figurative; but if it seem to command any heinous wickedness or crime, or to forbid that which is profitable or beneficial to others, it is figurative. For example, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in*

¹ *De consecrat. dist. 2. Hoc. est.* ² *De consecrat. dist. 2. Sect. Utrum.*

³ *Lib. 3. Tom. 3. p. 53.*

you : this seems to command a heinous wickedness and crime, therefore it is a figure ; commanding us to communicate of the passion of our Lord, and with delight and advantage to lay up in our memory that his flesh was crucified and wounded for us. So that, according to St. Austin's best skill in interpreting Scripture, the literal eating of the flesh of Christ, and drinking his blood, would have been a great impiety ; and therefore the expression is to be understood figuratively ; not as Cardinal Perron would have it, only in opposition to the eating of his flesh and blood in the gross appearance of flesh and blood, but to the real eating of his natural body and blood, under any appearance whatsoever : for St. Austin doth not say, this is a figurative speech wherein we are commanded really to feed upon the natural body and blood of Christ under the species of bread and wine, as the Cardinal would understand him ; for then the speech would be literal and not figurative : but he says, this is a figurative speech wherein we are commanded spiritually to feed upon the remembrance of his Passion.

To these I will add but *three* or *four* testimonies more in the *two* following ages.

The first shall be of *Theodoret*, who speaking of that prophecy of *Jacob*¹ concerning our Saviour, *he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes*, hath these words, *As*² *we call the mystical fruit of the vine, (that is, the wine in the Sacrament after consecration the blood of the Lord, so he (viz. Jacob) calls the blood of the true vine (viz. of Christ) the blood of the grape : but the blood of Christ is not literally and properly but only figuratively the blood of the grape, in the same sense as he is said to be the true vine ; and therefore the wine in the Sacrament after consecration is in like manner not literally and properly but figuratively the blood*

¹ Gen. xlix. 11.

² Dialog. 1.

of Christ. And he explains this afterwards, saying, that *our Saviour changed the names, and gave to his body the name of the symbol or sign, and to that symbol or sign the name of his body; thus when he had called himself the vine, he called the symbol or sign his blood: so that in the same sense that he called himself the vine, he called the wine, which is the symbol of his blood, his blood: for, says he, he would have those who partake of the divine mysteries not to attend to the nature of the things which are seen, but by the change of names to believe the change which is made by grace; for he who called that, which by Nature is a body, wheat and bread, and again likewise called himself the vine, he honoured the symbols with the name of his body and blood; not changing Nature, but adding grace to Nature.* Where you see he says expressly, that when he called the symbols or elements of the Sacraments, viz. *Bread and wine, his body and blood, he made no change in the nature of the things, only added grace to nature, that is, by the divine grace and blessing he raised them to a spiritual and supernatural virtue and efficacy.*

The second is of the same *Theodoret*, in his second Dialogue between a Catholic under the name of *Orthodoxus*, and a heretic under the name of *Erunistes*; who maintaining that the humanity of Christ was changed into the substance of the divinity (which was the heresy of *Eutyches*) he illustrates the matter by this similitude: *As, says he, the symbols of the Lord's body and blood are one thing before the invocation of the priest, but after the invocation are changed and become another thing; so the body of our Lord after his ascension is changed into the divine substance.* But what says the Catholic *Orthodoxus* to this? why, he talks just like one of Cardinal *Perron's* heretics: *Thou art, says he, caught in thine own net, because the mystical symbols after consecration do not pass out of their own nature; for they remain in their former substance, figure, and ap-*

pearance, and may be seen and handled even as before. He does not only deny the outward figure and appearance of the symbols to be changed, but the nature and substance of them, even in the proper and strictest sense of the word substance; and it was necessary so to do, otherwise he had not given a pertinent answer to the similitude urged against him.

The next is one of their own Popes, *Gelasius*, who brings the same instance against the *Eutychians*: Surely¹, says he, the Sacraments which we receive of the body and blood of our Lord are a divine thing, so that by them we are made partakers of a divine nature, and it yet ceaseth not to be the substance or nature of bread and wine; and certainly the image and resemblance of Christ's body and blood are celebrated in the action of the mysteries, that is, in the Sacrament. To make this instance of any force against the *Eutychians*, who held that the body of Christ upon his ascension ceased, and was changed into the substance of his divinity, it was necessary to deny that there was any substantial change in the Sacrament of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. So that here is an infallible authority, one of their own Popes, expressly against *Transubstantiation*.

The last testimony I shall produce is of *Facundus*, an African bishop, who lived in the 6th century. Upon occasion of justifying an expression of one who had said that Christ also received the adoption of sons, he reasons thus: Christ² vouchsafed to receive the Sacrament of adoption both when he was circumcised and baptized: and the Sacrament of adoption may be called adoption, as the Sacrament of his body and blood, which is in the consecrated bread and cup, is by us called his body and blood: not that the bread, says he, is properly his body and the cup his blood, but because they contain in them the mysteries of his

¹ Biblioth. Pat. Tom. 4. ² Facund. p. 144. edit. Par. 1670.

body and blood; hence our Lord himself called the blessed bread and cup which he gave to his disciples, his body and blood. Can any man after this believe that it was then, and had ever been, the universal and received doctrine of the Christian Church, that the bread and wine in the Sacrament are substantially changed into the proper and natural body and blood of Christ?

By these plain testimonies which I have produced, and I might have brought a great many more to the same purpose, it is, I think, evident beyond all denial, that *Transubstantiation* has not been *the perpetual belief of the Christian Church*. And this likewise is acknowledged by many great and learned men of the *Roman Church*. *Scotus*¹ acknowledgeth, that this doctrine was not always thought necessary to be believed, but that the necessity of believing it was consequent to that declaration of the Church made in the Council of *Lateran* under Pope *Innocent III*. And *Durandus*² freely discovers his inclination to have believed the contrary, if the Church had not by that determination obliged men to believe it. *Tonstal*³ Bishop of *Durham* also yields, that *before the Lateran Council men were at liberty as to the manner of Christ's presence in the Sacrament*. And *Erasmus*⁴, who lived and died in the communion of the *Roman Church*, and than whom no man was better read in the ancient fathers, doth confess that it was late before the Church defined *Transubstantiation*, unknown to the ancients both name and thing. And *Alphonsus a Castro*⁵ says plainly, that concerning the *Transubstantiation of the bread into the body of Christ, there is seldom any mention in the ancient writers*. And who can imagine that these learned men would have granted the ancient Church and Fathers to have

¹ In Sent. l. 4. Dist. 11. Qu. 3. ² In Sent. l. 4. Dist. 11. Qu. 1. n. 15.

³ De Euchar. l. 1. p. 146.

⁴ In 1 Epist. ad Corinth. c. 7. citante etiam *Salmerone*, Tom. 9. Tract. 16. p. 108.

⁵ De Hæres. l. 8.

been so much strangers to this doctrine, had they thought it to have been the perpetual belief of the Church? I shall now in the

Second place, give an account of the *particular time and occasion of the coming in of this doctrine*, and by what steps and degrees it grew up and was advanced into an *article of faith* in the *Romish Church*. The doctrine of the *corporeal presence of Christ* was first started upon occasion of the dispute about the *worship of images*, in opposition whereto the *Synod of Constantinople*, about the year 750, did argue thus: that our Lord having left us no other image of himself but the Sacrament, in which the substance of bread is the image of his body, we ought to make no other image of our Lord. In answer to this argument, the second *Council of Nice*, in the year 787, did declare, that the Sacrament, after consecration, *is not the image and antitype* of Christ's body and blood, but is *properly* his body and blood. So that the *corporeal presence of the body of Christ in the Sacrament* was first brought in to support the *stupid worship of images*: and indeed it could never have come in upon a more proper occasion, nor have been applied to a fitter purpose.

And here I cannot but take notice how well this agrees with *Bellarmino's*¹ observation, that *none of the ancients who wrote of heresies, hath put this error (viz. of denying Transubstantiation) in his catalogue; nor did any of the ancients dispute against this error for the first 600 years*. Which is very true, because there could be no occasion then to dispute against those who denied *Transubstantiation*, since, as I have shown, this doctrine was not in being, unless among the *Eutychian* heretics, for the first 600 years and more. But *Bellarmino*² goes on, and tells us, that *the first who called in question the truth of the body of our Lord in the Eucharist, were the ICONOMACHI*,

¹ De Euchar. l. 1. c. 10.

² Ibid.

(the opposers of images,) after the year 700, in the Council of Constantinople; for these said there was one image of Christ instituted by Christ himself, viz. the bread and wine in the Eucharist, which represents the body and blood of Christ: wherefore from that time the Greek writers often admonish us, that the Eucharist is not the figure or image of the body of the Lord, but his true body, as appears from the seventh Synod; which agrees most exactly with the account which I have given of the first rise of this doctrine, which began with the corporeal presence of Christ in the Sacrament, and afterwards proceeded to Transubstantiation.

And as this was the first occasion of introducing this doctrine among the Greeks, so in the Latin or Roman Church Pascacius Radbertus, first a Monk, and afterwards Abbot of Corbey, was the first broacher of it, in the year 818.

And for this, besides the evidence of history, we have the acknowledgment of two very eminent persons in the Church of Rome, Bellarmine and Sirmondus, who do in effect confess that this Pascacius was the first who wrote to purpose upon this argument. Bellarmine¹ in these words, *this author was the first who hath seriously and copiously written concerning the truth of Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist*: and Sirmondus² in these, *he so first explained the genuine sense of the Catholic Church, that he opened the way to the rest who afterwards in great numbers wrote upon the same argument*: but though Sirmondus is pleased to say that he only first explained the sense of the Catholic Church in this point, yet it is very plain from the records of that which are left to us, that this was the first time this doctrine was broached in the Latin Church: and it met with great opposition in that age, as I shall have occasion hereafter to show. For Rabanus

¹ De Scriptis. Eccles.

² In vita Pascasil.

Maurus, archbishop of *Mentz*, about the year 847 reciting the very words of *Pascasius*, wherein he hath delivered this doctrine, hath this remarkable passage concerning the novelty of it; *Some*, says he, *of late not having a right opinion concerning the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord, have said that this is the body and blood of our Lord which was born of the Virgin Mary, and in which our Lord suffered upon the cross, and rose from the dead: which error*, says he, *we have opposed with all our might*¹. From, whence it is plain, by the testimony of one of the greatest and most learned bishops of that age, and of eminent reputation for piety, that what is now the very doctrine of the Church of *Rome* concerning the Sacrament, was then esteemed an error broached by some particular persons, but was far from being the generally received doctrine of that age. Can any one think it possible that so eminent a person in the Church, both for piety and learning, could have condemned this doctrine as an error and a novelty, had it been the general doctrine of the Christian Church, not only in that but in all former ages: and no censure passed upon him for that which is now the great burning article in the Church of *Rome*, and esteemed by them one of the greatest and most pernicious heresies?

Afterwards in the year 1059, when *Berengarius* of *France* and *Germany* had raised a fresh opposition against this doctrine, he was compelled to recant it by *Pope Nicholas* and the Council at *Rome*, in these words: *That the bread and wine which are set upon the altar, after the consecration, are not only the Sacrament, but the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; and are sensibly, not only in the Sacrament, but in truth, handled and broken by the hand of the priest, and ground or bruised by the teeth*.

¹ Epist. ad Heribaldum, c. 33.

*the faithful*¹. But it seems the *Pope* and his *Council* were not then skilful enough to express themselves rightly in this matter: for the *Gloss* upon the *Canon Law*, says expressly, *That unless we understand these words of BERENGARIUS (that is in truth of the Pope and his Council) in a sound sense, we shall fall into a greater heresy than that of BERENGARIUS: for we do not make parts of the body of Christ.* The meaning of which gloss I cannot imagine, unless it be this, that the *body of Christ*, though it be in truth broken, yet it is not broken into parts (for we do not make parts of the body of Christ) but into wholes²: Now this new way of breaking a body, not into parts but into wholes, (which in good earnest is the doctrine of the Church of Rome,) though to them that are able to believe *Transubstantiation*, it may, for any thing I know, appear to be *sound sense*; yet to us that cannot believe so, it appears to be *solid nonsense*.

About twenty years after, in the year 1079, *Pope Gregory VII.* began to be sensible of this absurdity; and therefore in another *Council* at *Rome* made *Berengarius* to recant in another form, viz. *that the bread and wine which are placed upon the altar, are substantially changed into the true and proper and quickening flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and after consecration are the true body of Christ, which was born of the Virgin, and which being offered for the salvation of the world, did hang upon the cross, and sits at the right hand of the Father*³.

So that from the first starting of this doctrine in second *Council of Nice*, in the year 787, till the 4 under *Pope Gregory VII.* in the year 1079, almost three hundred years that this doctrine

de Consecrat. distinct. 2. L'offrande. de corp. et sang. Do-
Gual. Mon. de Sacram. Algar. de Sacram. 2 1. c. 12.
Gual. Secret. de Consecrat. dist. 2. in cap. Ego Berengarius.
cap. 1. c. 12.

was contested, and before this misshapen monster of *Transubstantiation* could be licked into that form in which it is now settled and established in the Church of *Rome*. Here then is a plain account of the first rise of this doctrine, and of the several steps whereby it was advanced by the Church of *Rome* into an *Article of faith*. I come now in the

Third place, to answer the great pretended demonstration of the impossibility that this doctrine, if it had been new, should ever have come in in any age, and been received in the Church: and consequently it must of necessity have been the perpetual belief of the Church in all ages: for if it had not always been the doctrine of the Church, whenever it had attempted first to come in, there would have been a great stir and bustle about it, and the whole Christian world would have rose up in opposition to it. But we can show no such time when it first came in, and when any such opposition was made to it, and therefore it was always the doctrine of the Church. This demonstration Monsieur *Arnauld*, a very learned man in *France*, pretends to be unanswerable: whether it be so or not, I shall briefly examine. And,

First, We do assign a punctual and very likely time of the first rise of this doctrine, about the beginning of the *ninth* age: though it did not take first root, nor was fully settled and established till towards the end of the *eleventh*. And this was the most likely time of all other, from the beginning of Christianity, for so gross an error to appear: it being, by the confession and consent of their own historians, the most dark and dismal time that ever happened to the Christian Church, both for ignorance, and superstition, and vice. It came in together with idolatry, and was made use of to support it: a fit prop and companion for it. And indeed, what might not the enemy have sown in so dark and a night; when so considerable a part of the Christian world was lulled asleep in profound ignorance.

superstition? And this agrees very well with the account which our *Saviour* himself gives in the *parable* of the *tares*, of the springing up of errors and corruptions in the field of the Church. *While the men slept*¹, the enemy did his work in the night, so that when they were awake, they wondered how and whence the *tares* came; but being sure they were there, and that they were not sown at first, they concluded *the enemy had done it*.

Secondly, I have shown likewise that there was *considerable opposition* made to this error at its first coming in. The general ignorance and gross superstition of that age rendered the generality of people more quiet and secure, and disposed them to receive any thing that came under a pretence of mystery in religion, and of a greater reverence and devotion to the Sacrament, and that seemed any way to countenance the worship of *images*, for which, at that time, they were zealously concerned. But notwithstanding the security and passive temper of the people, the men most eminent for piety and learning in that time made great resistance against it. I have already named *Rabanus*, archbishop of *Mentz*, who opposed it as an error lately sprung up, and which had then gained but upon some few persons. To whom I may add *Heribaldus* bishop of *Auxerres*, in *France*, *Jo. Scotus*, *Erigena*, and *Ratramus*, commonly known by the name of *Bertram*, who at the same time were employed by the Emperor *Charles the Bald* to oppose this growing error, and wrote learnedly against it. And these were the eminent men for learning at that time. And because *Monsieur Arnauld* will not be satisfied unless there were some stir and bustle about it, *Bertram* in his preface to his book tells us, that they who according to their several opinions talked differently about the mystery of *Christ's body and blood*, were divided by a small *hism*.

¹ Matt. xlii. 24.

Thirdly, Though for a more clear and satisfactory answer to this pretended *demonstration* I have been contented to untie this knot, yet I could without all these pains have cut it. For suppose this doctrine had silently come in and without opposition, so that we could not assign the particular time and occasion of its first rise: yet if it be evident from the records of former ages for above 500 years together, that this was not the ancient belief of the Church; and plain also, that this doctrine was afterwards received in the *Roman Church*, though we could not tell how and when it came in, yet it would be the wildest and most extravagant thing in the world to set up a pretended demonstration of reason against plain experience and matter of fact. This is just *Zeno's* demonstration of the impossibility of motion, against *Diogenes* walking before his eyes. For this is to undertake to prove that impossible to have been, which most certainly was. Just thus the *servants* in the *parable* might have demonstrated that the *tares* were *wheat*, because they were sure none but good seed was sown at first, and no man could give any account of the punctual time when any *tares* were sown, or by whom: and if an enemy had come to do it, he must needs have met with great resistance and opposition; but no such resistance was made, and therefore there could be no *tares* in the *field*, but that which they called *tares* was certainly *good wheat*. At the same rate a man might demonstrate that *our king*, his *majesty of Great Britain*, is not returned into *England*, nor restored to his crown; because there being so great and powerful an army possessed of his lands, and therefore obliged by interest to keep him but, it was impossible he should ever come in without a great deal of fighting and bloodshed: but there was no such thing, therefore he is not returned and restored to his crown. And by the like kind of demonstration, one might prove that the *Turk* did not invade *Christendom* last year, and besiege *Vienna*; because if he

had, the *most Christian king*, who had the greatest army in *Christendom* in readiness, would certainly have employed it against him; but Monsieur *Arnauld* certainly knows no such thing was done: and therefore, according to his way of demonstration, *the matter of fact*, so commonly reported and believed, concerning the *Turk's invasion of Christendom* and *besieging Vienna* last year, was a perfect mistake. But a man may demonstrate till his head and heart ache, before he shall ever be able to prove that which certainly is or was, never to have been. For of all sorts of impossibilities, nothing is more evidently so, than to make that which hath been not to have been. All the reason in the world is too weak to cope with, tough and obstinate a difficulty. And I have often wondered how a man of Monsieur *Arnauld's* great wit and sharp judgment could prevail with himself to engage in so bad and baffled a cause; or could think to defend it with so *wooden a dagger* as his *demonstration of reason* against certain *experience and matter of fact*: a thing, if it be possible, of equal absurdity with what he pretends to demonstrate, *Transubstantiation itself*. I proceed to the

Third pretended ground of this doctrine of Transubstantiation; and that is, *the infallible authority of the present Church to make and declare new articles of faith*. And this in truth is the ground into which the most of the learned men of their Church did heretofore, and many do still, resolve their belief of this doctrine: and, as I have already shown, do only say, that they see no sufficient reason, either in *Scripture* or *tradition*, for the belief of it: and that they should have believed the contrary, had not the determination of the Church obliged them other-

at if this doctrine be obtruded upon the world merely by virtue of the authority of the *Roman Church*, and the declaration of the *Council* under *Gregory VII.* or of the *Lateran council* under

Innocent III., then it is a plain innovation in the Christian doctrine, and a new article of faith imposed upon the Christian world. And if any Church hath this power, the Christian faith may be enlarged and changed as often as men please; and that which is no part of our Saviour's doctrine, nay, any thing, though ever so absurd and unreasonable, may become an article of faith, obliging all Christians to the belief of it, whenever the Church of *Rome* shall think fit to stamp her authority upon it: which would make Christianity a most uncertain and endless thing.

The *fourth* pretended ground of this doctrine is, *the necessity of such a change as this in the Sacrament, to the comfort and benefit of those who receive it.* But there is no colour in this, if the thing be rightly considered: because the comfort and benefit of the Sacrament depend upon the blessing annexed to the Institution. And as *water* in *baptism*, without any substantial change made in that element, may, by the Divine blessing accompanying the institution, be effectual to the washing away of sin, and spiritual regeneration; so there can no reason in the world be given why the elements of *bread* and *wine* in the *Lord's Supper* may not, by the same Divine blessing accompanying this institution, make the worthy receivers partakers of all the spiritual comfort and benefit designed to us thereby, without any substantial change made in those elements, since our Lord hath told us, that *verily the flesh profiteth nothing*. So that if we could do so odd and strange a thing as to eat the very natural flesh and drink the blood of our Lord, I do not see of what greater advantage it would be to us, than what we may have by partaking of the symbols of his body and blood as he hath appointed in remembrance of him. For the spiritual efficacy of the Sacrament doth not depend upon the nature of the thing received, supposing we receive what our Lord appointed, and receive it with a right prepara-

ration and disposition of mind, but upon the supernatural blessing that goes along with it, and makes it effectual to those spiritual ends for which it was appointed.

The *fifth* and last pretended ground of this doctrine is, to magnify the power of the priest in being able to work so great a miracle. And this with great pride and pomp is often urged by them as a transcendent instance of the Divine wisdom, to find out so admirable a way to raise the power and reverence of the priest, that he should be able every day, and as often as he pleases, by repeating a few words, to work so miraculous a change, and, (as they love most absurdly and blasphemously to speak) to make God Himself.

But this is to pretend to a power above that of God himself, for he did not, nor cannot make himself, nor do any thing that implies a contradiction, as *Transubstantiation* evidently does in their pretending to make God. For to make that which already is, and make that now which always was, is not only vain and trifling if it could be done, but impossible, because it implies a contradiction.

And what if after all, *Transubstantiation*, if it were possible, and actually wrought by the priest, would yet be no miracle: for there are two things necessary to a miracle, that there be a supernatural effect wrought, and that this effect be evident to sense. So that though a supernatural effect be wrought, yet if it be not evident to sense, it is to all the ends and purposes of a miracle as if it were not; and can be no testimony or proof of any thing, because itself stands in need of another miracle to give testimony to it, and to prove that it was wrought. And neither in Scripture, nor in profane authors, nor in common use of speech, is any thing called a miracle but what falls under the notice of our senses: a miracle being nothing else but a supernatural effect

evident to sense, the great end and design whereof is to be a sensible proof and conviction to us of something that we do not see.

And for want of this condition, *Transubstantiation*, if it were true, would be no miracle. It would be indeed very *supernatural*, but for all that it would not be a *sign* or *miracle*: for a sign or miracle is always a thing sensible, otherwise it could be no sign. Now that such a change as is pretended in *Transubstantiation* should really be wrought, and yet there should be no sign and appearance of it, is a thing very wonderful, but not to sense; for our senses perceive no change, the bread and wine in the Sacrament to all our senses remaining just as they were before; and that a thing should remain to all appearance just as it was, hath nothing at all of wonder in it: we wonder indeed when we see a strange thing done, but no man wonders when he sees nothing done. So that *Transubstantiation*, if they will needs have it a miracle, is such a miracle as any man may work that hath but the confidence to face men down that he works it, and the fortune to be believed: and though the Church of *Rome* may magnify their priests upon account of this miracle, which they say they can work every day and every hour, yet I cannot understand the reason of it; for when this great work (as they call it) is done, there is nothing more appears to be done than if there were no miracle: now such a miracle, as to all appearance is no miracle, I see no reason why a Protestant minister, as well as a Popish priest, may not work as often as he pleases; or if he can have but the patience to let it alone, it will work itself. For surely nothing in the world is easier than to let a thing be as it is, and by speaking a few words over it, to make it just what it was before. Every man, every day, may work ten thousand such miracles.

And, thus I have dispatched the first part of my discourse, which was to consider the pretended

grounds and *reasons* of the Church of *Rome* for this doctrine, and to show the weakness and insufficiency of them. I come in the

SECOND place, to produce our *objections* against it. Which will be of so much the greater force, because I have already shown this doctrine to be destitute of all Divine warrant and authority, and of any other sort of ground sufficient in reason to justify it. So that I do not now object against a doctrine which has a fair probability of Divine Revelation on its side, for that would weigh down all objections, which did not plainly overthrow the probability and credit of its Divine Revelation; but I object against a doctrine by the mere will and tyranny of men imposed upon the belief of Christians, without *any* evidence of *Scripture*, and against *all* the evidence of *reason* and *sense*.

The objections I shall reduce to these *two* heads. *First*. The infinite scandal of this doctrine to the Christian Religion. And, *Secondly*, The monstrous and insupportable absurdity of it. .

First, The infinite scandal of this Doctrine to the *Christian Religion*. And that upon these *four* accounts: 1. Of the stupidity of this Doctrine. 2. The real barbarousness of this Sacrament and rite of our Religion, upon supposition of the truth of this Doctrine. 3. Of the cruel and bloody consequences of it. 4. Of the danger of idolatry; which they are certainly guilty of, if this Doctrine be not true.

I. Upon account of *the stupidity of this Doctrine*, I remember that *Tully*, who was a man of very good sense, instanceth in the conceit of *eating God* as the extremity of madness, and, so stupid an apprehension as he thought no man was ever guilty of. *When we call*¹, says he, *the fruits of the earth Ceres, and wine Bacchus, we use but the common language; but*

¹ De Nat. Deorum, l. 3.

do you think any man so mad as to believe that which he eats to be God? It seems he could not believe that so extravagant a folly had ever entered into the mind of man. It is a very severe saying of *Averroes* the *Arabian* philosopher, (who lived after this Doctrine was entertained among *Christians*) and ought to make the Church of *Rome* blush, if she can: *I have travelled, says he, over the world, and have found divers sects; but so sottish a sect or law I never found, as is the sect of the Christians; because with their own teeth they devour their God whom they worship*¹. It was great stupidity in the people of *Israel* to say, *Come, let us make us Gods*: but it was civilly said of them, *Let us make us Gods that may go before us*, in comparison of the Church of *Rome*, who say, *Let us make a God that we may eat him*. So that upon the whole matter I cannot but wonder, that they should choose thus to expose faith to the contempt of all that are endued with reason. And, to speak the plain truth, the Christian Religion was never so horribly exposed to the scorn of Atheists and Infidels, as it hath been by this most absurd and senseless Doctrine. But thus it was foretold that the man of sin should come with power and signs, and lying miracles, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness², with all the legerdemain and juggling tricks of falsehood and imposture; amongst which this of Transubstantiation, which they call a miracle, and we a cheat, is one of the chief: And in all probability those common juggling words of *hocus-pocus*, are nothing else but a corruption of *Hoc est corpus*, by way of ridiculous imitation of the priests of the Church of *Rome* in their trick of Transubstantiation. Into such contempt by this foolish Doctrine, and pretended miracle of theirs, have they brought the most sacred and venerable mystery of our religion.

2. It is very scandalous likewise upon account of

¹ Dionys, Carthus. in 4 dist. 10. art. 1.

² 2 Thessa. ii. 10.

the real *barbarousness* of this Sacrament and rite of our Religion, upon supposition of the truth of this Doctrine. Literally to *eat the flesh of the Son of man, and to drink his blood*, St. Augustine, as I have shown before, declares to be a great *impiety*. And the impiety and barbarousness of the thing is not in truth extenuated, but only the appearance of it, by its being done under the *species of bread and wine*. For the thing they acknowledge is really done, and they believe that they verily eat and drink the natural flesh and blood of Christ. And what can any man do more unworthily towards his friend? How can he possibly use him more barbarously, than to feast upon his living flesh and blood? It is one of the greatest wonders in the world, that it should ever enter into the minds of men to put upon our Saviour's words, so easily capable of a more convenient sense, and so necessarily requiring it, a meaning so plainly contrary to reason and sense, and even to humanity itself. Had the ancient Christians owned any such Doctrine, we should have heard it from the adversaries of our Religion in every page of their writings; and they would have desired no greater advantage against the Christians, than to have been able to hit them in the teeth with their feasting upon the natural flesh and blood of their Lord, and their God, and their best Friend. What endless triumphs would they have made upon this subject? And, with what confidence would they have set the cruelty used by Christians in their *Sacrament*, against their God *Saturn's* eating his own children, and all the cruel and bloody rites of their idolatry? But that no such thing was then objected by the *Heathens* to the *Christians*, is to a wise man instead of a thousand demonstrations, that no such Doctrine was then believed.

§ It is scandalous also upon account of the *cruel and bloody consequences* of this Doctrine: so contrary to the plain laws of Christianity, and to one great

end and design of this sacrament, which is to unite Christians in the most perfect love and charity to one another: Whereas this Doctrine hath been the occasion of the most barbarous and bloody tragedies that ever were acted in the world. For this hath been in the Church of *Rome* the great *burning article*: and as absurd and unreasonable as it is, more Christians have been murdered for the denial of it than perhaps for all the other articles of their Religion. And I think it may generally pass for a true observation, that all sects are commonly most hot and furious for those things for which there is least reason; for what men want of reason for their opinions, they usually supply and make up in rage. And it was no more than needed to use this severity upon this occasion; for nothing but the cruel fear of death could in probability have driven so great a part of mankind into the acknowledgment of so unreasonable and senseless a Doctrine.

O blessed Saviour! thou best friend and greatest lover of mankind, who can imagine thou didst ever intend that men should kill one another for not being able to believe contrary to their senses; for being unwilling to think, that thou shouldst make one of the most horrid and barbarous things that can be imagined, a main duty and principal mystery of thy Religion; for not flattering the pride and presumption of the priest, who says he can make God, and for not complying with the folly and stupidity of the people, who are made to believe that they can eat him?

4. Upon account of the danger of *idolatry*; which they are certainly guilty of if this Doctrine be not true, and such a change as they pretend be not made in the Sacrament; for if it be not, then they worship a creature instead of the Creator, God blessed for ever. But such a change I have shown to be impossible: or if it could be, yet they can never be certain that it is, and consequently are always in danger of

idolatry: and that they can never be certain that such a change is made, is evident; because, according to the express determination of the Council of *Trent*, that depends upon the mind and *Intention of the Priest*, which cannot certainly be known but by Revelation, which is not pretended in this case. And if they be mistaken in this change, through the knavery or crossness of the Priest, who will not *make God* but when he thinks fit, they must not think to excuse themselves from idolatry because they intended to worship God and not a creature: for so the *Persians* might be excused from idolatry in worshipping the sun, because they intend to worship God and not a creature; and so indeed we may excuse all the idolatry that ever was in the world, which is nothing else but a mistake of the Deity, and upon that mistake a worshipping of something as God which is not God.

II. Besides the infinite scandal of this Doctrine upon the accounts I have mentioned, *the monstrous absurdities* of it make it insupportable to any Religion. I am very well assured of the grounds of Religion in general, and of the Christian Religion in particular; and yet I cannot see that the foundations of any revealed Religion are strong enough to bear the weight of so many and so great absurdities, as this Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* would load it withal. And to make this evident, I shall not insist upon those gross contradictions, of the same body being in so many several places at once; of our Saviour's giving away himself with his own hands to every one of his Disciples, and yet still keeping himself to himself; and a thousand more of the like nature: but to show the absurdity of this Doctrine, I shall only ask these few questions.

1. Whether any man have, or ever had, greater evidence of the truth of any divine revelation than every man hath of the falsehood of *Transubstantiation*? Infidelity were hardly possible to men, if all men

had the same evidence for the Christian Religion which they have against *Transubstantiation*, that is, the clear and irresistible evidence of sense. He that can once be brought to contradict or deny his senses, is at an end of certainty; for what can a man be certain of, if he be not certain of what he sees? In some circumstances our senses may deceive us, but no faculty deceives us so little and so seldom: and when our senses do deceive us, even that error is not to be corrected without the help of our senses.

2. Supposing this Doctrine had been delivered in Scripture in the very same words that it is decreed in the Council of *Trent*, by what clearer evidence or stronger argument could any man prove to me that such words were in the Bible, than I can prove to him that bread and wine after consecration are bread and wine still? He could but appeal to my eyes to prove such words to be in the Bible, and with the same reason and justice might I appeal to several of his senses to prove to him that the bread and wine after consecration, are bread and wine still.

3. Whether it be reasonable to imagine, that God should make that a part of the Christian Religion which shakes the main external evidence and confirmation of the whole? I mean the miracles which were wrought by our Saviour and his Apostles, the assurance whereof did at first depend upon the certainty of sense. For if the senses of those who say they saw them were deceived, then there might be no miracles wrought; and consequently it may justly be doubted whether that kind of constitution which God hath given to the Christian Religion would be strong enough to prove it, supposing *Transubstantiation* to be a part of it; because every man hath as great evidence that *Transubstantiation* is false, as he hath that the Christian Religion is true. Suppose then *Transubstantiation* to be part of the Christian Doctrine, it must have the same confirmation with the

whole, and that is miracles: but of all doctrines in the world, it is peculiarly incapable of being proved by a miracle. For if a miracle were wrought for the proof of it, the very same assurance which any man has of the truth of the miracle, he hath of the falsehood of the Doctrine, that is the clear evidence of his senses. For that there is a miracle wrought to prove *that what he sees in the Sacrament is not bread but the body of Christ*, there is only the evidence of sense; and there is the very same evidence to prove, *that what he sees in the Sacrament is not the body of Christ, but bread*. So that here would arise a new controversy, whether a man should rather believe his senses giving testimony against the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, or bearing witness to a miracle wrought to confirm that doctrine: there being the very same evidence against the truth of the Doctrine, which there is for the Truth of the Miracle: and then the argument for *Transubstantiation*, and the objection against it, would just balance one another; and consequently *Transubstantiation* is not to be proved by a miracle, because that would be, *to prove to a man by something that he sees, that he doth not see what he sees*. And if there were no other evidence that *Transubstantiation* is no part of the Christian Doctrine, this would be sufficient, that what proves the one, doth as much overthrow the other; and that miracles, which are certainly the best and highest external proof of Christianity, are the worst proof in the world of *Transubstantiation*, unless a man can renounce his senses at the same time that he relies upon them. For a man cannot believe a miracle without relying upon sense, nor *Transubstantiation* without renouncing it. So that never were any two things so ill coupled together as the Doctrine of Christianity and that of *Transubstantiation*, because they draw several ways, and are ready to strangle one another: for the main evidence of the Christian

Doctrine, which is Miracles, is resolved into the certainty of sense, but this evidence is clear and point blank against *Transubstantiation*.

4. And *Lastly*, I would ask what we are to think of the argument which our Saviour used to convince his Disciples after his resurrection that his body was really risen, and that they were not deluded by a ghost or apparition? Is it a necessary and conclusive argument or not? *And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have*¹. But now, if we suppose with the Church of *Rome*, the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* to be true, and that he had instructed his Disciples in it just before his death, strange thoughts might justly have arisen in their hearts, and they might have said to him; Lord, it is but a few days ago since thou didst teach us not to believe our senses, but directly contrary to what we saw, *viz.* that the bread which thou gavest us in the Sacrament, though we saw it and handled it, and tasted it to be bread, yet was not bread, but thine own natural body, and now thou appealest to our senses to prove that this is thy body which we now see. If seeing and handling be an unquestionable evidence that things are what they appear to our senses, then we were deceived before in the Sacrament, and if they be not, then we are not sure now that this is thy body which we now see and handle, but it may be perhaps bread under the appearance of flesh and bones; just as in the Sacrament, that which we saw and handled, and tasted to be bread, was thy flesh and bones under the form and appearance of bread. Now upon this supposition it would have been a hard matter to have quieted the thoughts of his Disciples: for if the argument which our Saviour used did certainly prove to them, that

¹ Luke xxiv. 38, 39.

what they saw and handled was his body, his very natural flesh and bones, because they saw and handled them (which it were impious to deny), it would as strongly prove, that what they saw and received before in the Sacrament was not the natural body and blood of *Christ*, but real bread and wine: and consequently, that according to our Saviour's arguing after his resurrection they had no reason to believe *Transubstantiation* before. For that very argument by which our Saviour proves the reality of his body after his resurrection, doth as strongly prove the reality of bread and wine after consecration: but our Saviour's argument was most infallibly good and true, and therefore the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* is undoubtedly false.

Upon the whole matter I shall only say this, that some other points between us and the Church of *Rome* are managed by some kind of wit and subtilty, but this of *Transubstantiation* is carried out by mere dint of impudence and facing down of mankind.

And of this the more discerning persons of that Church are of late grown so sensible, that they would now be glad to be rid of this odious and ridiculous Doctrine. But the Council of *Trent* hath rivetted it so fast into their Religion, and made it so necessary and essential a point of their belief, that they cannot now part with it if they would: it is like a millstone hung about the neck of Popery, it will sink it at the last.

And though some of their greatest wits, as Cardinal *Perron*, and of late Monsieur *Arnauld*, have undertaken the defence of it in great volumes; yet it is an absurdity of that monstrous and massy weight, that no human authority or wit is able to support it. It will make the very pillars of *St. Peter's* crack, and requires more volumes to make it good than would fill the *Vatican*.

And now I would apply myself to the poor deluded people of that Church, if they were either permitted

by their Priests, or durst venture without their leave, to look into their Religion, and to examine the Doctrines of it. *Consider and show yourselves men.* Do not suffer yourselves any longer to be led blindfold, and by an implicit faith in your Priests, into the belief of nonsense and contradiction. Think it enough and too much to let them rook you out of your money, for pretended pardons and counterfeit relics; but let not the authority of any Priest or Church, persuade you out of your senses. Credulity is certainly a fault as well as infidelity: and he who said, *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed;* hath no where said, *Blessed are they that have seen, and yet have not believed;* much less, *Blessed are they that believe directly contrary to what they see.*

To conclude this Discourse. By what hath been said upon this argument it will appear, with how little truth and reason, and regard to the interest of our common Christianity, it is so often said by our adversaries, that there are as good arguments for the belief of *Transubstantiation* as of the Doctrine of the *Trinity*: When they themselves do acknowledge with us that the Doctrine of the *Trinity* is grounded upon the Scriptures, and that according to the interpretation of them by the consent of the ancient Fathers: but their Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* I have plainly shown to have no such ground, and that this is acknowledged by very many learned men of their own Church. And this Doctrine of theirs being first plainly proved by us to be destitute of all Divine warrant and authority, our objections against it from the manifold contradictions of it to reason and sense, are so many demonstrations of the falsehood of it. Against all which they have nothing to put in the opposite scale but the infallibility of their Church, for which there is even less colour of proof from Scripture than for *Transubstantiation* itself. But so fond are they of their own innovations and errors, that rather than the

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dictates of their Church, how groundless and absurd soever, should be called in question; rather than not have their will of us in imposing upon us what they please, they will overthrow any Article of the Christian faith, and shake the very foundations of our common Religion: a clear evidence that the Church of *Rome* is not the true mother, since she can be so well contented that Christianity should be destroyed, rather than the point in question should be decided against her.

THE LND.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS
OF THE
REFORMERS AND FATHERS
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

No. VI.

PRAYERS,
BY THOMAS BECON.



LONDON:
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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

THOMAS BECON, one of the English Reformers, was educated at Cambridge. He was made chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer, and presented, in 1547, to the rectory of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, London, of which he was deprived in 1554; and having been twice imprisoned in Queen Mary's reign, fled to Marpurg. While resident abroad, he continued to manifest his zeal for the Reformed religion, and addressed an "Epistle to the Faithful in England," exhorting them to patient perseverance in the truth. Upon the death of Mary, Becon returned to England, and in 1560 was appointed to the living of Buckland, in Hertfordshire, and in 1563 to that of St. Dionis Backchurch, Fenchurch-street, London. He was also a prebendary of Canterbury, in which city he departed this life in peace, about 1570, in the sixtieth year of his age.

SELECTIONS,

8c.

PART VI.

PRAYERS BY THOMAS BECON,

CHAPLAIN TO THE PROTECTOR SOMERSET, AND PREBENDARY OF CANTERBURY : SELECTED FROM "THE FLOWER OF GODLY PRAYERS," PUBLISHED BY HIM IN 1550.

A Prayer for the Morning.

O HEAVENLY Father, who like a diligent watchman lookest always upon thy faithful people, whether they wake or sleep; and mightily defendest them, not only from Satan, that old enemy of mankind, but also from all other their adversaries, so that through thy godly power they are preserved harmless—I most heartily thank thee that it hath pleased thy fatherly goodness so to take care of me, thine unprofitable servant, this night past; that thou hast both safely kept me from all mine enemies, and also hast given me sweet sleep unto the great comfort of my body. I most entirely beseech thee, O most merciful Father, to show the like kindness towards me this day, in preserving my body and soul, that my enemies may have no power over me, and that I, likewise, may neither think, breathe, speak, or do anything that may be displeasing to thy fatherly good-

ness, dangerous to myself, or hurtful to my neighbour; but that all my enterprizes may be agreeable to thy most blessed will, which is always good and godly, doing that which may advance thy glory, answer to my vocation, and profit my neighbour, whom I ought to love as myself; that whensoever thou callest me from this vale of misery, I may be found the child, not of darkness, but of light, and so for ever reign with thee in glory, who art the true and everlasting light. To whom, with thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, and the Holy Ghost, that most sweet Comforter, be all honour and glory. Amen.

A Prayer for the Night.

O Lord God and my heavenly Father, forasmuch as by thy divine ordinance the night approaches, and darkness begins to overwhelm the earth, and time requires that we give ourselves to bodily rest and quietness; I render unto thee most hearty thanks for thy loving-kindness, who hast vouchsafed to preserve me this day from the danger of mine enemies; to give me my health, to feed me, and to send me all things necessary for the comfort of this my poor and needy life. I most humbly beseech thee, for Jesus Christ's sake, that thou wilt mercifully forgive me all that I have this day committed against thy fatherly goodness, either in word, deed, or thought. And that thou wilt vouchsafe to shadow me this night under the comfortable wings of thy almighty power, and defend me from Satan, and from all his crafty assaults, that neither he nor any of his ministers shall have power over either my body or my soul; but that although my body through thy benefits enjoys sweet and pleasant sleep, yet my soul may continually watch unto thee, think of thee, delight in thee, and evermore praise thee; that when the joyful light of the day returns, according to thy godly appointment,

I may rise again with a faithful soul, and undefiled body; and so afterward behave myself all the time of my life, according to thy blessed will and commandment, by casting away the works of darkness and putting on the armour of light; that men seeing my good works, may thereby be led to glorify thee, my heavenly Father, who, with thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, and the Holy Ghost, that most sweet Comforter, livest and reignest, one true and everlasting God, world without end. Amen.

For the true knowledge of ourselves.

Most loving Saviour, it is written in thy holy Gospel, that thou camest into this world, not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. Suffer me not, O Lord, to be of the number of those who justify themselves, who, boasting their own righteousness, their own works and merits, despise the righteousness that cometh by faith, which alone is allowable before thee. Give me grace to know and to acknowledge myself, as I am, even the son of wrath by nature; a wretched sinner, and an unprofitable servant, and wholly to depend on thy merciful goodness with strong and unshaken faith, that in this world thou mayest continually call me unto true repentance, seeing I continually sin, and in the world to come bring me unto everlasting glory. Amen.

A Confession of our Sins unto the Lord Jesus Christ.

The tyranny of Satan, mine old enemy, who ceases not daily to assail me with his subtle temptations, and to wound me with his cruel darts, compels me at this present time, O blessed Redeemer, and mine only Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of the true and living God, to flee for succour unto the pitifulness of

thy tender mercy, lest I be for ever swallowed up as a prey of that dreadful dragon. O Lord, I am feeble and weak, but Satan is strong and mighty, the prince of darkness and god of this world; having at his commandment an infinite multitude both of wicked spirits, and of ungodly men, who both daily and diligently labour to satisfy his cruel tyranny, and to work my destruction, whom to resist I am not able. Notwithstanding, Lord, thou art more valiant than he, stronger than all his army, more able to save than he to condemn. Yea, he is thy bond-slave. Thou rulest him as thy good pleasure is. He can rage against thine elect no further than thy most godly will is to suffer him. For thou art the blessed Seed of the woman, that treadest down the head, and destroyest the power of that old serpent. Thou art that Lord who hast swallowed up hell. Thou art the king of Glory, who by thy death destroyest him that had the power of death, that is the devil.

Moreover, not only Satan and his angels, but also the world and the flesh most grievously assail me, yea, and lead me away captive as their prey. The world with its vain pleasures, deceitful riches, and transitory possessions, so blinds the eyes of my heart, that I cannot love thee, O most blessed Saviour, with such pureness of mind as I ought. Notwithstanding this comforts me well, that thou hast overcome the world, and that, whensoever it pleases thee to endue me with thy Holy Spirit, I may, through thy grace, subdue the world, and make that a bond-slave unto me, which now so mightily reigns, triumphs, and rules over me. The flesh also, with her subtle enticements, so wholly occupies me, that I am altogether flesh, and all that is evil, and by this means wholly without thy Holy Spirit. Yet hast thou, by the pureness of thy blessed flesh, which thou hast unfeignedly taken of the undefiled virgin, Mary thy mother, by the wonderful operation of the Holy Ghost, so slain the raging lusts of our sinful flesh,

that whensoever we lament our case unto thee, confessing our misery and weakness, thou both art able, and also willing, through thy Holy Spirit, to quench those raging lusts, mortify those carnal affections, that so inordinately boil in our inward members, and to make us truly spiritual.

Thus seest thou, O most merciful Redeemer, with how great a multitude of enemies I am besieged and set round about, who without ceasing seek my destruction, and have already most tyrannously spoiled me of my garments, and most grievously wounded me, leaving me half dead; so that without thy help I must needs perish. Help, therefore, O most blessed Saviour, and deliver me from these mine enemies. Heal thou me, O Lord, and I shall be healed. Save thou me, and I shall be saved. Ah, good Lord, my sins are great and infinite, I confess, but thy mercies are much greater and more infinite. My wounds are many and grievous, but thou art that most loving Samaritan, full of pity and compassion, who, by pouring wine and oil into my wounds, art sufficiently able to heal them, although they were ten thousand more. I am a sinner, but thou art a Saviour. I am sick, but thou art a physician. I am blind, but thou art the Light of the world. I am Satan's prisoner, but thou art a Redeemer. I am dead in sin, but thou art the Resurrection and life. I am hungry, but thou art the living Bread. I am thirsty, but thou art the Well of life. I am poor, but thou art the Lord of all wealth. I am a barren tree, but thou art the true and fruitful Vine. I am the lost sheep, but thou art the good Shepherd. I am that riotous son, but thou art the gentle Father. I am by nature the child of wrath, but thou art by nature the Son of the living God. I am by nature sinful man, but thou art by nature Man righteous and innocent. I am a daily offender, but thou art a continual Mediator. I am a breaker of the law, but thou art a fulfiller of the same. I have lost the heavenly inheritance through sin, but

thou hast recovered it by thy death. I have wrought mine own destruction, but thou by thy precious blood hast brought unto me salvation. Thus albeit, O most merciful Saviour, I find in myself nothing but sin, death, and condemnation, yet in thee find I grace, mercy, favour, reconciliation, forgiveness of sins, and everlasting life. Take away therefore what is mine, which is all evil; and give me what is thine, which is all good.

Thou art called Christ; anoint me therefore with thy Holy Spirit. Thou art called a Physician; according therefore to thy name, heal me. Thou art called the Son of the living God; according therefore to thy power deliver me from the devil, the world, and the flesh. Thou art called the Resurrection; lift me up therefore from the condemnable state wherein I most miserably lie. Thou art called the Life; quicken me up therefore out of this death wherewith through sin I am most grievously detained. Thou art called the Way; lead me therefore from the vanities of this world, and from the filthy pleasures of the flesh, unto heavenly and spiritual things. Thou art called the Truth; suffer me not therefore to walk in the way of error, but cause me to tread the path of truth in all my doings. Thou art called the Light; put away therefore from me the works of darkness, that I may walk as the child of light in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. Thou art called a Saviour; save me therefore from my sins according to thy name. Thou art called Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end; begin thou therefore a good life in me, and finish the same unto the glory of thy blessed name. So shall I, receiving these benefits at thy merciful hand, praise thee, and magnify thy blessed name for evermore. Amen.

A Prayer for Remission of Sins.

O LORD GOD, if we, wretched sinners, had not loving

promises of thy tender mercy in the holy scriptures, for the comfort of our weak consciences and sorrowful hearts, we could see none other remedy, so great and infinite are our sins, but that we must needs despair. But forasmuch as whatsoever things are written are written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the scriptures we may have hope, our sins, although ever so many and abominable, do not so much make us sorrowful, as thy loving-kindness and tender mercies make us glad. Our sins, we confess, are innumerable; but thy mercies are also infinite. Thou art that most gentle Lord who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he turn and live. Thou confessest that thou camest into this world to save sinners, to call, not the righteous, but sinners unto repentance, and to seek that which was lost. Thou callest unto thee all them that are diseased and laden with the heavy burden of sin, and promisest that thou wilt ease them. Yea, by the prophet thou sayest, "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool¹." Yea, thou sayest moreover, that for thy own sake, even for thy mercy and name's sake, thou wilt be good unto us, favour us, and so cast away all our sins behind thy back, that thou wilt never remember them more. O Lord, thou art the God who cannot lie, thou art the Truth itself, thou art faithful in thy words, and holy in all thy works. For according to these thy loving promises, hast thou ever dealt with the children of men, whensoever they repented and turned unto thee. When they forsook their sin-

¹ Isaiah i. 16, 17, 18.

ful living and called upon thy holy name, thou forgavest all their sins and healedst all their infirmities. Thou savedst their life from destruction, and crownedst them with mercy and loving-kindness. For thou, O Lord God, art full of compassion and mercy, long-suffering, and of great goodness. Thou wilt not alway be chiding, neither wilt thou keep thine anger for ever. Neither wilt thou deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our wickedness. For look, how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth, so great is thy mercy toward them that fear thee; look, how wide the east is from the west, so far dost thou set our sins from us. Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so art thou merciful unto them that fear thee. For thou knowest whereof we are made, thou rememberest that we are but dust; that a man in his time is but as grass, and flourisheth as a flower of the field; for as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone, and the place thereof knoweth it no more. But thy merciful goodness, O Lord, endureth for ever and ever, upon them that fear thee. Of this thy loving-kindness and tender mercy, who at any time hath not tasted, if he sought it with all his heart; Forgavest thou not David both his adultery and murder, when he repented and confessed his sin? How oft didst thou call back the plagues of thy vengeance, when the children of Israel lamented their sins and turned unto thee!

How merciful didst thou show thyself to the Ninevites, when they repented and humbled themselves in thy sight! How lovingly spakest thou to that sinful woman in thy gospel, and forgavest her all her sins, because she repented and believed! Peter, thy disciple, although most cowardly denying thee, after that he had bitterly wept and lamented his sins, thou didst behold with thy merciful eye, and favourably receivedst him again into the number of thy holy apostles. One of them that died with thee, being both a thief and a murderer, after that he had called

unto thee for grace, thou didst promise to place with thee in paradise. Many other notable examples of thy great mercies find we in the Holy Scriptures, which will not suffer us to despair of thy clemency and goodness, be our sins and wickednesses ever so many; but they rather do encourage us, boldly to come unto the throne of thy grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. O most gentle Saviour, thou art that most loving Shepherd, who diligently soughtest the wandering sheep, lovingly layedst it upon thy shoulders, and tenderly broughtest it home again. Seek us who have so long run astray, lay us upon thy merciful shoulders, and bring us home again unto the company of thy faithful. Thou art that most merciful Samaritan, who beholding the miserable state of the wounded man with thy pitiful eye, came unto him, made his wounds clean, poured in wine and oil, bound them up, laid the sick man upon thy beast, and carried him unto the inn, and never left him till he was perfectly whole. O most loving Saviour, vouchsafe also, with thy merciful eye to look upon our wretched state, which without thy help must needs perish. Our wounds are deadly wounds, and cannot be healed of any, either in heaven or in earth, but of thee alone, who art the true Physician, and alone healest them that are contrite in heart. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment¹." Let it therefore please thee, of thy great goodness to make clean our wounds, to pour in the wine and oil of spiritual gladness, to bind them up, and never to leave us till thou hast made us perfectly whole, and hast brought us into thy

¹ Isaiah i. 5, 6.

heavenly kingdom. Heal thou us, O Lord, and we shall be healed; save thou us, and we shall be saved.

Thou art the most tender Father, who receivest home again with embracing arms that lost son who had wasted all his goods with riotous living. So soon as he returned unto thee, repented him of his disorders, confessed his sin, and humbled himself in thy sight, thou hadst compassion on him, and came and fell on his neck and kissed him. Thou didst command thy servants also to bring forth that best garment and put it on thy son, and to put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. Thou gavest commandment also to fetch a fatted calf and to kill it, and saidst, Let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. Show this thy favour, O most gentle Father, to us thy children also, who have ungodly used the godly and virtuous gifts, which thou both friendly and liberally gavest unto us. The remembrance of this our prodigal and licentious living sorely grieveth us, and we are heartily sorry that we have so grievously offended thy fatherly goodness. Notwithstanding, according to thine accustomed goodness, we most humbly beseech thee, for thy name's sake, to have mercy on us, to forgive us our sins, and to receive us again into thy favour. Put on us that new garment of innocency, that precious ring of faith wherewith we are married unto Thee; and those most godly shoes of the evangelic peace, that we may walk from henceforth in the ways of thy holy commandments, and do that which is pleasant in thy sight. Give us grace so unfeignedly to repent and to amend our lives, that the angels of heaven may rejoice at our conversion; and so wash us from our sins more and more, that at the last we may be clean, and appear beautiful in thy heavenly Father's sight, through thee our only Saviour, who with the same thy Father and the Holy

Ghost, livest and reignest, one true and everlasting God, world without end. Amen.

A Prayer that we may have the fear of God before our eyes in all our doings.

O Almighty and everlasting God, thy holy word teacheth us that thou art not only a Father, but also a Lord; not only a Forgiver, but also an Avenger; not only a Saviour, but also a Judge. And as thou, being a Father, a Forgiver, and Saviour, dost pardon and show mercy; so thou being a Lord, an Avenger, a Judge, punishest and condemnest. Neither do thy holy scriptures set forth unto us only a gospel which comforts us, quickens us, shows us joyful tidings, forgives our sins, quiets our conscience, and brings unto us everlasting life; but also a law which reproves, accuses, condemns us, wounds and slays our conscience, yea, and throws us down headlong into the deep dungeon of hell. And as the Gospel lifts us up and makes us joyful, with the hope of remission and forgiveness of our sins, so does the law pluck us down, and almost drive us unto desperation, for fear of the plagues and everlasting punishments which thou hast prepared for them that despise thy holy ordinances; so that we may not only love thee as a Father, a Forgiver, a Saviour, but also fear thee as a Lord, an Avenger, a Judge. Forasmuch, therefore, O most gentle Saviour, and most righteous Judge, as nothing does so mightily put away sin, and make us to walk in the way of thy commandments, as reverently to fear thee, to stand in awe of thy judgment and heavy displeasure, we most entirely pray thee to give us that fear which thou requirest of us in thy holy scriptures, and whereunto thou hast promised so many large and bounteous benefits, that we may not only love thee as a Saviour, and honour thee as a Father, but also reverence thee as a Lord, and fear thee as a Judge.

O Lord, all things are open unto thine eyes, neither is any thing hid from thee, who seest the very secrets and most inward thoughts of our hearts; give us, therefore, grace, that in all our enterprises we ever set thy fear before our eyes, and stand in awe of thee and of thy righteous judgments, that we attempt nothing whereby we should provoke thy heavy displeasure against us, but so walk in thy fear, and in thy holy ordinances, that we may at all times love thee as a Saviour, honour thee as a Father, reverence thee as a Lord, and fear thee as a Judge. So shall it come to pass, that we, reverently fearing thee as the child his father, shall not only avoid all such evils as might make thee our angry Lord and austere Judge, but also embrace those virtues which shall evidently declare our faithful love, true honour, unfeigned reverence, and humble fear toward thee, our loving Father and most merciful Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for Faith.

We are taught by thy holy apostle, O most loving Saviour, that without faith it is impossible to please thee, and therefore they that come unto thee must believe that thou art God, yea, and such a God as is both able, and also will abundantly reward all them that with true faith seek thee. For thine eyes, O Lord, look upon faith, and thou dost appear and show thyself unto them that have faith in thee; yea, through faith, thou, being the King of glory, art joined to the souls of the faithful, and makest them partakers of thy divine nature, through the wonderful working of thy blessed Spirit. Through faith, so many as believe are justified, made the sons and heirs of God, and have everlasting life. By faith, we obtain of God all good things, even whatsoever we ask in thy name. Seeing that faith is so precious a jewel in thy sight, that without it nothing is acceptable unto thy

divine Majesty, and we of our own nature cannot have this most singular treasure, except thou givest it unto us from above, and dost breathe it into our hearts by thy Holy Spirit—for we of ourselves are blind, ignorant, foolish, and by no means can perceive the things that pertain to the Spirit of God—we most heartily beseech thee to take away from us all infidelity and unfaithfulness, which we received of old Adam, and to plant in us true faith and undoubted belief, that we may be thoroughly persuaded that thou art the Son of the living God, very God and very man, our only sweet-smelling sacrifice, our only Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor; our only wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; by whom alone, and for whose sake only, thy heavenly Father is well pleased with us, our sins are remitted, and grace and everlasting life are freely given unto us. O Lord God, suffer us not to lean to our own wisdom, nor to believe as blind flesh fancieth, nor to seek salvation where superstition dreams, but let our faith be grounded only on thy word, and give us grace truly to believe in thee, with all our heart to put our trust in thee, to look for all good things of thee, to call upon thy blessed name in adversity, and with joyful voices, and more joyful hearts, to praise and magnify it in prosperity. Suffer us not to doubt either of God thy heavenly Father, or of thee God his Son, or of God the Holy Ghost, three persons, but notwithstanding one very God, besides whom there is no God, either in heaven or in earth. Grant also that we may assuredly believe whatsoever is contained in the holy Scriptures, and by no means suffer ourselves to be plucked from the verity thereof, but mainly and stedfastly abide in the same, even unto death, though the world rage, and the devil roar. And this faith, O blessed Jesus, increase thou daily in us more and more, that at the last through thy goodness, we may be made perfect and strong men in thy holy religion, and show ourselves both before thee and the world, truly

faithful, by bringing forth plenty of good works unto the glory and honour of thy name, who, with God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest true God, world without end. Amen.

A Prayer for Charity.

O most gentle Saviour, thy holy apostle writeth that the end of the commandment is love that cometh of a pure heart and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. For he that loveth thee his Lord God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, with all his strength, and his neighbour as himself, fulfilleth the whole law. For all the law and the prophets require no more of us than love, even to love thee our Lord God above all things, and our neighbour as ourself. Without this love, all that we do, seem it ever so praiseworthy in the sight of men, is abominable before thee. Yes, as thy blessed apostle saith, Though I spake with the tongues of men and angels, and yet had no love, I were even as a sounding brass or as a tinkling cymbal. And though I could prophesy, and understand all secrets, and all knowledge, yea, if I had all faith, so that I could move mountains out of their places, and yet had no love, I were nothing, and though I bestowed all my goods to feed the poor, and though I gave my body to be burned, and yet had no love, it profiteth me nothing. For by love are we known to be thy disciples, even as the devil's children are known by hatred and maliciousness. And the love, O Lord, that thou requirest of us is no worldly or fleshly love, (for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; and whosoever will be a friend of the world, is made the enemy of God,) but godly, spiritual, sincere, true, and pure love, even such love as suffereth long, is courteous, envieth not, doeth not frowardly, swelleth not, dealeth not dishonestly, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh

not evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; suffereth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things.

This godly love, this Christian charity, give thou unto us, O good Lord, that we may unfeignedly and with all our heart love thee, our Lord God, who so dearly lovedst us, that thou gavest thyself for us, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet savour to God. Take away from us the love of worldly things, which though they appear ever so pleasant and beautiful, are notwithstanding mere Vanity, and give us grace so to use this world as though we use it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. Make us also to abhor the filthy and vile pleasures of the corrupt flesh, and by no means to be entangled with the love of them, the end whereof is dishonour, shame, corruption, destruction, and damnation; and kindle our hearts so fervently with thy love, that nothing may delight and please us, but only thou, and whatsoever may make unto thy glory, and is agreeable unto thy blessed commandment; so that thou only, mayest be our love, our delight, our joy, our mirth, our solace. And whatsoever is without thee, and estranged from thy love, let it be counted of us more vain than vanity itself, and more filthy than the very dung. Grant also, that from this our love towards thee, there may issue out a vehement and burning love toward our neighbours, yea, toward our very enemies; that we may love them from the very heart, yea, even as ourselves; pray for them, give them good counsel, help them, defend them, succour them, provide for their necessities, and deal with them in all things as we wish to be dealt withal. O Lord God, thou art love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in thee, and thou in him; grant that in this world we may so dwell together through love, thou in us, by thy Holy Spirit, and we in thee by faith, that after our departure from this vale of misery, we may be placed with thee in thy heavenly mansion,

and so continue with thee in glory for ever and ever.
Amen.

A Prayer for a Godly Life.

O merciful Father and everlasting God, it greatly grieveth us, that we, through the grievous and continual assaults of our enemies, are not able to pass our years in this world with such purity of life as we ought, and as thou requirest of us. Verily we are on every part so besieged and compassed round about of our adversaries, that scarcely at any time we can be free from their pestiferous and deadly darts, or yet have so much respite as once to breathe toward true godliness. O most loving God, thou art our Father, and we thy children; convenient therefore is it, that we thy children represent and openly declare in our conversation, the manners of thee our Father. Thou art good, gentle, loving, charitable, merciful, patient, long-suffering, holy, righteous, and faithful. It, therefore, becomes us thy children, in our living to practise goodness, gentleness, love, charity, mercy, patience, long-suffering, holiness, righteousness, faith. Thou hast given us an example, that even as thou hast done, so we likewise should do. If we say we dwell in thee, we ought to walk as thou hast walked. For thou hast called us, not to uncleanness, but unto holiness. Thou hast delivered us from the power of our enemies, that we, being without fear, should serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. The blood of thy Son Jesus Christ hath cleansed us from all sin; not that we should continue in darkness, but rather walk in the light, as thou art in the light. Thy loving kindness hath appeared unto all men, not that we should follow ungodliness and worldly lusts, but that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Thou didst choose us in Christ, before the foundations of the world were laid, that we should be

holy and without blame before thee through him. We are thy workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which thou ordainest afore that we should walk in them.

Forasmuch then as all the benefits which thou hast bestowed upon us, are given us unto this end, that we should walk worthy of thy kindness, represent thine image in our conversation, mortify the flesh and the lusts thereof, and have nothing to do with Satan or the world; but lead a good life, garnished full of good works, and in all points fashioned after the rule of thy blessed word; we most heartily pray thee to endue us with thy Holy Spirit, which may take away our stony heart, and give us a new, fleshy, and soft heart. Kill that old man in us which is corrupt through deceitful lusts, and fashion in us that new man which is made after thy image and likeness, in righteousness and true holiness. Suffer us not to give over ourselves again unto our old lusts and concupiscences, wherewith we were led when we knew not thee nor thy Son Christ; but even as thou who hast called us art holy, so likewise grant that we may be holy in all our conversation.

O merciful God, not the hearers of thy law, but the fulfillers of it, shall be justified before thee. Neither shall every one that sayeth unto thee, Lord, Lord, enter into the kingdom of heaven, but they that do the will of thee our Father which art in heaven. To confess thee with our mouth, and to deny thee with our deeds, worketh rather our damnation than salvation. For the true knowledge of thee consisteth not in talking but in walking, not in favouring but in following, not in loving but in living. To promise thee by mouth that we will work in thy vineyard, and yet to work not at all, declares us not to be thy sons. To boast of the justification of faith, and not to bring forth the fruits thereof; to glory in the merits of thy Son Christ, in his blood, death, and passion, and not to live worthy of his kindness;

to profess thy holy Gospel, and not to walk according to the doctrine thereof; to be baptized in thy name, and not to mortify our members which are of the earth, nor to walk in a new life; to be partakers of thy divine mysteries, and not to be made one spirit with thee, what availeth it? We are thy friends, if we do those things that thou commandest us. We are thy servants, if we be obedient to thy will. We are thy sons, if we honour and reverence thee according to thy word. We seek thy glory, if we attempt nothing whereby thou shouldest be dishonoured. Leading a life conformable to thy blessed will, we shall provoke the very enemies of thy truth to praise thee; but if contrariwise, thou shalt be evil spoken of. Grant, therefore, we beseech thee, that our life may answer to our profession, and that the light of our good works may so shine before men, that they, seeing our godly conversation, may glorify thee our heavenly Father. Amen.

A Thanksgiving unto God for sending his Son into this world to die for our sins.

O most loving and heavenly Father, whithersoever we turn our eyes, we behold with wonder the bottomless seas of thine unspeakable goodness towards mankind. After the fall of the sinful angels, what an exceeding great kindness was this, to make man after thy similitude, image, and likeness, that he and his posterity might furnish and occupy those places in thy glorious kingdom, which the proud and disobedient angels lost by their proud disobedience and disobedient pride; not only to make man, but also to provide aforehand all things necessary for him; yea, to make him lord and ruler of all things contained in the earth under thee his Lord God! O what a wonderful loving-kindness was this! Again, to preserve, keep, and defend man, to watch continually over him, whether he wake or sleep, as the diligent

and careful shepherd watcheth over his flock, that no evil befall man; and to direct his thoughts, counsels, and devices unto the best, never leaving him, till thou hast brought him unto thy heavenly kingdom. Oh who is able with tongue to express, or with heart to think, this thy hearty good-will toward man! These benefits, O most merciful Father, are exceeding great tokens of thy dear love toward mankind; but the gift of thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, whom thou gavest unto us to be our Saviour, our Redeemer, our peace-maker, our wisdom, our sanctification, and our righteousness, is the most excellent gift and the most precious treasure. A child to be born for our sakes! The Son of the most high God to be given us, to be our own for ever! Oh love passing all love! Oh kindness rather to be marvelled at, than by mouth to be uttered. God the Father so dearly to love the world, that he should give his only begotten Son, that every one that believeth in him may not perish, but have everlasting life! God the Father to send his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him should be saved! God the Father not to spare his own Son, but to deliver him even unto death for us all, yea, and with him even to give us all things! Oh most gentle kindness, exceeding all love and kindness! Wonderfully, O most loving Father, doth this set forth thy hearty love toward us, that when we were yet ungodly and wicked sinners, thou gavest thy Son to die for our sins. He was wounded for our offences, and smitten for our wickedness. The pain of our punishment thou layedst upon him, and with his stripes were we healed. Through him, O Lord, didst thou pardon all our sins. It was thy good pleasure to bruise him, that when he had made his soul an offering for sin, he might see long lasting seed. For he is thy righteous servant, who with his wisdom doth justify and deliver the multi-

tude, for he hath borne away our sins. In his name, and in none other under heaven, doth our salvation consist. By him are we at peace with thee our Lord God. By him have we redemption through his blood, even remission of our sins. By him are we delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into thy heavenly kingdom. By him hast thou reconciled all things unto thyself. By him hast thou set at peace, through the blood of his cross, both things in heaven, and things on earth. By him hast thou quickened us, and forgiven us all our trespasses. He hath put out the hand-writing that was against us, contained in the written law. Yea, he hath taken that hand-writing out of the way, and hath fastened it to his cross; and hath spoiled rule and power, and hath made a show of them openly, and hath triumphed over them in his own person.

He is the Seed of the woman that treadeth down Satan's head. He is that Seed in whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. He is that Lord who alone hath trodden the wine-press, neither was there any at all that helped him. He is that Saviour who saveth his people from their sins. He is that thy well-beloved Son, for whose sake thou art well pleased with man. He is that Bread of life which came down from heaven; if any eat of that bread, he shall live for ever. He is that good Shepherd who gave his life for his sheep. He is the resurrection and the life; whoso believeth on him, although he were dead, shall live, and every one that liveth and believeth in him shall never die. He is that mighty Prince that hath overcome the world. He is the perfect fulfilling of the law, to justify all that believe. He hath delivered us from the curse of the law, when he was made a curse for us. He, in his own person, hath purged our sins. He, through death, hath put down him that had rule over death, that is to say, the devil, and

hath made us free from the danger of bondage. He, with one offering of his blessed body, hath made perfect for ever them that are sanctified. He, now in the end of the world, hath appeared, once for all, to put sin to flight, by the offering up of himself. He hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto thee, God his Father. Inestimable are the treasures, and infinite are the pleasures which we receive of thee, through this thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. And this thy well-beloved and only begotten Son, with all his, hast thou given unto us, so that he and all that he hath is ours, and we may through thy gift justly claim it to be our own. For this thy fatherly love and unspeakable kindness in giving thy Son unto death for our sake, and for all thy other benefits which we have received at thy merciful hand through him, we give thee most hearty thanks, desiring thee that we never commit any thing, in thought, word, or deed, that may offend thy divine Majesty; but, calling to remembrance, that we are not redeemed with corruptible silver and gold from our conversation, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb undefiled and without spot, we may live worthy of this thy kindness, and show ourselves obedient children to thee, our heavenly Father; not fashioning ourselves any more unto our old lusts of ignorance; but as thou, who hast called us, art holy, even so in like manner may we be holy in all our conversation and living, unto the glory of thy blessed name. Amen.

A Thanksgiving unto God for all his benefits.

We most heartily thank thee, O Lord God our heavenly Father, for thy manifold and inestimable benefits which thou hast given unto us, both for our body and soul, yea, and freely, even of thine own goodness

without our desert. We thank thee, that it hath pleased thee of thy great mercy, first to create and make us according to thine own image and likeness, and to place us in joyful paradise, where we should have continually remained in a blessed and quiet state, if, through the subtle and deceitful suggestions of Satan our old enemy, we had not transgressed thy holy commandments. We thank thee also, O most gentle Father, for thy loving kindness, which thou showedst unto us, when we all were perished and lost through the sin of our first father, Adam. For when thou mightest justly have condemned us, and cast us into perpetual damnation, thou, like a father of singular great love, hadst pity on us, and savedst us by the death and passion of thy well-beloved Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all our sins, and paid a sufficient price by his precious blood for all the wickedness that we at any time heretofore have committed, or hereafter shall commit, through our frailty or weakness, so that we repent, believe, and amend. Neither wast thou thus contented, that he should only die for our sins, but thou also didst raise him up again for our justification, and to make us righteous in thy sight. Moreover, after that he had showed himself unfeignedly alive to his apostles, by manifest and evident tokens, certain days after his resurrection, through the power of his Godhead, he ascended up into heaven, perfect God and perfect man; where he now sitteth on thy right hand, and maketh intercession for us, being our only Mediator and Advocate. From thence we look for him to come again at the day of judgment, not as a cruel judge to condemn and cast us away, but as a most loving Lord and gentle Saviour, to carry us with him into everlasting glory; there, world without end, to remain in such joys as eye hath not seen nor hath ear heard, nor yet is any heart able to think. For these thy most bounteous gifts, and for all thy other benefits,

which thou daily givest unto us of thy great mercy, both for our body and soul, we most humbly thank thee, most gentle and merciful Father, beseeching thee that thou wilt give us grace through thy Holy Spirit not to be unthankful, but to walk worthy of this thy kindness, and so to behave ourselves all our life time in this wretched world, according to thy holy will, that at the last day we may be found in the number of them to whom thy only begotten Son shall say, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Lord, let it so come to pass. Amen.

A Prayer against the Temptations of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh.

Albeit, O most mighty Captain, most valiant Warrior, and most triumphant Lord Christ Jesus, thou by thy death hast put down him that had lordship over death, that is to say, the devil, that thou mightest deliver them who through fear of death, were all their lifetime in danger of bondage—and albeit thou hast spoiled rule and power, and made a show of them openly, and hast triumphed over them in thine own person, and by this means delivered us from the hands of our enemies, that we might serve thee all the days of our life, in such holiness and righteousness as are acceptable before thee; yet the devil, for the old malice which he hath borne against man from his first creation, (for through envy of the devil, death entered into the world,) goeth forth still to rage against us; and walketh about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; and, if he were not restrained by thy godly power, he would surely swallow us up, so great is his tyranny, so mighty is his power. He prevailed against our first parents, yea, and that in the state of their innocency and im-

mortality. He afterward attempted others, and prevailed, whereof some, notwithstanding, were the chosen vessels of mercy. Hereof getting courage unto himself, he feared not to assail thee with his subtle temptations. Oh! is it then to be thought that he will let us alone, so feeble, so weak, and ready at every moment to be overthrown? Thou thyself callest him the prince of this world, and thy holy apostle nameth him the god of this world. Strong must he needs be, and of no small might, whom thy holy word so termeth; strong indeed in comparison of us, but weak and of no force, being compared with thee. This prince, this god of the world, hath the reprobate and the wicked already at his command, and thou dost suffer him continually to war against thine elect and chosen people, to exercise and try their faith, to prove their constancy, and in this their conflict to occasion them by hearty prayers to flee unto thy holy name, which is a strong tower and mighty fortress for so many as repair unto it; that they, getting aid at thy hand, may not only enter into battle with this their great and immortal enemy, but also, by the power of thy might, overcome him and put him to flight. And as thou hast given Satan this liberty to tempt, to exercise, prove, and try us, whether we be constant in thy faith and word or not, so doth he take thy proffer. And although thou sufferest him thus to do for our great profit and advantage, for we know that all things work for the best unto them that love God, even that we, of ourselves being weak, should have a glorious triumph and noble victory over him, through the mighty power of thee our chief Captain, yet hereof he takes occasion to seek our destruction. And that he may bring this to pass, besides the innumerable companies of hellish spirits, he takes unto himself two other our most cruel enemies, the world and the flesh. The one with his

vain pleasures, the other with her carnal lusts, so compass us round about, that if thy help were not present to us, we must needs perish.

O loving Lord and most gentle Saviour, thou seest our weakness, misery, and no strength. Thou knowest again the valour, might, and power of our adversaries. Our strength is no more to be compared with their might, than the strength of little David with the mighty power of great Goliath. Our spear, our sword, our shield, will do nothing in this behalf. Notwithstanding, Lord, we do not despair. For although there be not so great strength in us, that we may be able to resist this great company that cometh against us, yet have we this one refuge and succour, even to lift up our eyes unto thee, and to say, Our help cometh from the Lord our God who made heaven and earth. If God be on our side, who can be against us? The battle, O Lord God, is thine; our faith therefore is, that thou wilt give our enemies into our hands. Thou taughtest us to pray that we may not be led into temptation, and hast promised us that thou wilt not suffer us to be tempted above our strength, but wilt in the midst of the temptation, make a way for us to escape. Thou art faithful, fulfil therefore thy promise. And forasmuch as thy good pleasure is, that we shall manfully fight with these our enemies, (for what is the life of man in this world but a continual warfare?) and no man is crowned, except he strive lawfully, we, with our very heart despairing of our own strength and courage, most humbly beseech thee to be our Captain, and valiantly to defend us against our enemies, that they may not prevail against us.

Make us strong in thee, O Lord, and in the power of thy might. Put thy holy armour upon us, that we may stand steadfast against the crafty assaults of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against rule, against power, and against worldly rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly things. For this cause, O

most sweet Saviour, put upon us thy holy armour, that we may be able to resist in the evil day, and stand perfect in all things. Give us grace, therefore, to stand, and to gird our loins about with verity, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and shod with shoes prepared by the gospel of peace. But above all, grant that we may take unto us the shield of faith, wherewith we may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is thy blessed word. Grant also, that we, being thus godly armed, may, through thy power, might, and strength, not only enter battle with our enemies, but also valiantly fight with them, courageously put them to flight, and triumphantly carry away a glorious victory over them. So shall it come to pass that we, being valiant conquerors, through thy help, shall receive at thy hand, according to thy promise, manna to eat that is hid; and a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. Lord, for thy mercies' sake, grant us these our petitions; so shall we praise and magnify thy blessed name for ever and ever. Amen.

A Prayer for a competent and necessary Living.

O heavenly Father, thy Son and our Lord taught us to ask our bodily food of thee, and all other things that are necessary for the preservation of this our mortal and corruptible body. For thou art that Lord who givest meat to the hungry. Thou feedest all thy creatures in due time. Thou openest thine hand and replenishest all living things with thy blessing. Thine eyes are upon them that fear thee, and upon such as trust in thy mercy, that thou mayest deliver their lives from death, and nourish them in the time of hunger. They that fear thee shall have no scarceness, neither shall they want any good thing that seek thee. Never was it seen that the righteous man was forsaken, neither have his children begged their

bread on the earth. How wonderfully didst thou feed thy servant Elias, when thou sentest him meat twice in a day by the ravens! How marvellously didst thou increase the oil and meal of the widow of Sarepta! How didst thou provide for thy servant Daniel, when he was in prison for setting forth thy glory! How wonderfully didst thou feed the children of Israel, by sending them meat down from heaven by the space of forty years in the wilderness! The fowls of the air thou dost feed, which neither sow nor reap, nor yet carry into the barns. Thy Son also, (that we may depend on thy fatherly providence and not despair of a competent living,) fed many thousands with a few loaves of bread and a little number of small fishes. He also at a marriage turned water into wine, to show that those who live according to thy blessed word, every one in his vocation, shall want no good thing. Thou art the very living God, who givest us abundantly all things to enjoy them. Thou art our Father, thou therefore wilt not suffer us thy children to perish for hunger. Thou art our Lord, and therefore wilt not suffer us thy servants to die for want of clothes. Thou feedest the heathen and the brute, even beasts; is it then to be thought that thou wilt leave us succourless, who believe in thee, call on thy holy name, and hang on thy fatherly providence? We, therefore, being thoroughly persuaded that all good things, pertaining either to the body or to the soul, come from thee alone; doubting also nothing of thy bounteous liberality, and liberal bounty, toward them that with strong faith depend on thy fatherly providence, are bound at this present to come unto thy divine Majesty, most humbly beseeching thee to work in us, through thy Holy Spirit, a mind content with what is sufficient, seeing that no man's life standeth in the abundance of the things which he possesseth; seeing, also that we are strangers and pilgrims in

this world, and have here no continuing city, but seek one to come; again, seeing we brought nothing into the world, neither shall we carry any thing out of it. For naked came we out of our mother's womb, and naked shall we return to the earth again. Take away from us all superfluous worldly cares, and teach us to be content with food and raiment. Suffer us not, after the manner of the heathen, to be careful for worldly things, as though thou hadst no care for us; but teach us, first of all, to seek thy kingdom and the righteousness thereof, and so to look for all worldly and temporal things at thy merciful hand. O Lord, give us neither poverty nor riches, only grant thou us a necessary living, lest if we be full we deny thee, and say, What is the Lord? And lest we, being constrained through poverty, fall into stealing and forswear the name of the Lord our God. Lord, let it so come to pass for thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

A Prayer for the King's Council.

It is written, O most mighty and everlasting King, that where many are that give good counsel, there it goeth well with the common people, there are all things preserved in a goodly and seemly order, there does the public weal flourish with the abundance of all good things. May it please thee, therefore, O Lord, who hast the hearts of all rulers in thy hand, and directest their counsels unto what is thy good pleasure, mercifully to assist all those who are the king's council, and to give them thy Holy Spirit to be their president, ruler, and governor; that in all their assemblies, they may ever set before their eyes thy most high and princelike Majesty, the fear of thy name, the accomplishment of thy commandment, and always remember that they are servants appointed for the wealth and good of thy people; that whatsoever they attempt privately or openly, may turn unto the glory

of thy blessed name, unto the setting forth of thy holy word, unto the advancement of the king's honour, unto the profit of the people, unto the destruction of vice, and unto the commendation of virtue. Give them grace, O most merciful Father, so with one mind to consent in all goodly and righteous things, that they, ruling righteously, and we, living obediently, may altogether, with quiet hearts and free consents, praise and magnify thee our Lord God for ever and ever. Amen. —

A Prayer for Fathers and Mothers.

Forasmuch, O heavenly Father, as thou hast dealt with the children of men more nobly than with bruté beasts, and others thy creatures, by giving them a mind which is immortal, and never shall die; and that it may be made like unto the similitude, and image of thee, thou hast, in thy holy law, commanded fathers and mothers, whom thou hast blessed with the gift of children, to take diligent care for the virtuous bringing up of their sons and daughters, that they may learn, even from their very cradles, to know thee their Lord God, to believe in thee, to fear and love thee, to call upon thy blessed name, to be thankful unto thee, and to walk in thy holy commandments all the days of their life—we, knowing how forward, evil-disposed, and untoward, the heart, understanding, and disposition of man are, even from his very youth, if they be not restrained with the bridle of thy most blessed law, heartily pray thee to give to all fathers and mothers grace, after the example of Abraham, David, Philip the evangelist, and such others, to bring up their children even from their very infancy, in thy fear, in thy nurture, and in the knowledge of thy most healthful word; that they, seeking no less the garnishing their children's minds with learning and virtue, than the preserving of their bodies with food and raiment, may show themselves profitable members of the

Christian public weal, and faithful servants to thee their Lord God, who alone art worthy of all honour and glory. Amen.

A Prayer for Children.

As thou, O merciful Father, hast given commandment unto all fathers and mothers to bring up their children in thy fear, nurture, and doctrine; so likewise thy good pleasure is, that children should honour and reverence their parents, diligently give ear unto their virtuous instructions, and faithfully obey them. And as thou hast promised health, honour, glory, riches, long life, and all that is good, unto them that honour, reverence, and humbly obey their fathers and mothers, so hast thou threatened unto disobedient children, ignominy, evil-fame, contempt, shame, dishonour, poverty, sickness, short life, and such other plagues. Yea, in thy holy law thou dost not only pronounce them accursed that dishonour their fathers and mothers, but thou also commandest that if any child be stubborn and disobedient, and will not hear, but rather despises the commandment of his father and mother, the same should be stoned unto death without mercy—so greatly dost thou abhor disobedience and rebellion against all persons, but especiall against parents. We, therefore, heartily wishing that the plagues of thy fierce wrath may be far from us, for thou, O God, art a consuming fire, most humbly beseech thee to engrave in the hearts of all children of whatsoever age, kind, estate, or degree they be, true honour, hearty reverence, and unfeigned obedience toward their parents. Give them grace, O good Lord, that as they profess thy Son Christ in name, so they may truly represent his manners in their life and conversation, who willingly was obedient unto his mother Mary, and unto her husband Joseph, giving example to all children of the like subjection and obedience toward their parents. Engraft in them

such a love towards their fathers and mothers, that they may both reverence them with outward honour, and also after their power help them, succour them, provide for them, comfort and cherish them in their need, even as their parents nourished and comforted them in their infancy and tender age. But above all things, give them grace truly to honour thee, who art the heavenly Father, yea, our Father and our Redeemer, who hast made us, and daily cherishest us, even as a father or mother cherishes their own most dear children. So shall it come to pass, that they faithfully honouring thee, shall also heartily honour and unfeignedly obey their earthly parents in thy fear, unto the glory of thy most blessed name, which is most worthy to be honoured, world without end. Amen.

A Prayer for the Fruits of the Earth.

At the beginning thou commandest the earth, O Lord, to bring forth green grass, herbs, and trees, with their seeds and fruits, that they might be meat to thy creatures living on the earth, both to man and beast. After that deep and great flood wherein all living creatures perished, except Noah and such as were with him in the ark, not only herbs, seeds, and fruits gavest thou unto man for to eat, but also all others thy creatures that move or live on the earth, and the fish and fowl; so that all things are pure to them that are pure, neither can any thing be common or unclean, that thou hast made pure and clean. For all thy creatures, O Lord God, are good, and none of them are to be refused, if they be taken with thanksgiving. For they are sanctified by thy word and by prayer, and were ordained of thee to be received with thanksgiving of the faithful, and of them that know the truth.

Seeing then, that thou alone art the Creator and

Maker of all things, and hast prepared herbs, seeds, fruits, fish, and flesh, to be meat for man: seeing also that without thy blessing, all these thy creatures prosper not, nor yet come unto a fortunate end; but grow out of kind, wither away, perish, die, and come to nought, we most humbly beseech thee to bless us, and all the fruits of the earth with all others thy creatures, which thou hast made for man's use and profit. And forasmuch as neither he that planteth, nor he that watereth, is anything, but thou, O God, who givest the increase, grant, we pray thee, that the earth may give forth her fruit prosperously and plentifully, that we may enjoy the same in due and convenient time, unto our great joy and comfort. Let not the labours of our hands which we have taken in thy name, and according to thy word, be found vain, but according to thy promise bless all our labours, and bring them unto a happy end. For we, O Lord, feed not ourselves, but we are the sheep of thy pasture. Thou feedest us. Thou givest meat to the hungry. Thou preparest man his corn, and providest for the earth. Thou waterest her furrows, thou breakest the hard clods thereof, thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it. Thou crownest the year with thy bountifulness, and thy footsteps drop fatness. Thou also makest the dwellings of the wilderness fat, that they drop withal, and the little hills makest thou pleasant on every side. Yea, thou makest the vallies to stand so thick with corn, that they laugh and sing. Thou causest the wells to spring up among the vallies, and the waters to run among the hills, that all the beasts of the field may have drink, and that the wild asses may quench their thirst. Thou waterest the hills from above, the earth is filled with the fruits of thy works. Thou bringest forth grass for the cattle, and green herbs for the service of man. Thou bringest food out of the earth, wine to make glad the heart of man, oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to

strengthen man's heart. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! right wisely hast thou made them all, yea, the earth is full of thy riches. It is by thy blessing that our garners are full, and plenteous with all manner of store; that our sheep bring forth thousands, and hundred thousands in our villages and fields; that our oxen are lusty and fat; that we have all things plenteously for the sustenance of our bodies. For when thou openest thy hand, thou fillest every living creature with thy blessing, but when thou hidest thy face, they are sorrowful, mourn, and die for hunger. Forasmuch then, O most merciful Father, as we receive of thee alone all good things, vouchsafe, we most heartily beseech thee, to show us thy face, to lighten thy countenance upon us, to bless us, to make the earth fruitful, and to preserve the fruits of the same; that we thy creatures, receiving at thy merciful hand all things necessary for this our needy and beggarly life, may live and magnify thy blessed name, both in this world and in the world to come, through Jesus Christ, thy Son and our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer to be said for all such as lie at the point of Death.

O most loving Saviour and gentle Redeemer, who camest into this world to call sinners unto repentance, and to seek that which was lost, thou seest in what case this our brother lieth here, visited with thy merciful hand, altogether weak, feeble, sick, and ready to yield up his soul into thy holy hands. O look upon him, most gentle Saviour, with thy merciful eye, pity him, and be favourable unto him. He is thy workmanship, despise not therefore the work of thine own hands. Thou sufferedst thy blessed body and thy precious blood to be shed for his sins, and to bring him unto the glory of thy heavenly Father, let it not therefore come to pass that

thou shouldest suffer so great pains for him in vain. He was baptized in thy name, and gave himself wholly to be thy servant, forsaking the devil, the world, and the flesh! Confess him therefore before thy heavenly Father, and his blessed angels, to be thy servant. His sins, we confess, are great, for who is able to say, My heart is clean, and I am free from sin? but thy mercies, O Lord, are much greater; and thou camest not to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance. To them that are diseased and overladen with the burden of sin, dost thou promise ease. Thou art that God who willest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn and live. Thou art the Saviour who wishest all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of thy truth. Withdraw not therefore thy mercy from him because of his sins, but rather lay upon him thy saving health, that thou mayest show thyself toward him to be a Saviour. What greater praise can there be to a physician, than to heal the sick? Neither can there be a greater glory to thee, being a Saviour, than to save sinners. Save him therefore, O Lord, for thy name's sake. Again, let the law be no torment to his conscience, but rather give him grace, even in this extreme agony and conflict of death, to be fully persuaded that thou by thy death hast taken away all his sins, fulfilled the law for him, and by this means delivered him from the curse of the law, and paid his ransom; that he, thus being fully persuaded, may have a quiet heart, a free conscience, and a glad will to forsake this wretched world, and to go unto his Lord God. Moreover, thou hast conquered him that had rule of death, even Satan; suffer him not therefore to exercise his tyranny upon this our sick brother, nor to disquiet his conscience with the terrors of sin and pains of hell. Let not Satan or his infernal army tempt him further than he is able to bear, but evermore give him grace, even unto his last breath, valiantly to fight against the

devil with a strong faith in thy precious blood, that he may fight a good fight, and finish his course with joy, unto the glory of thy name, and the health of his soul. O Lord, so work in him by thy Holy Spirit, that he, with all his heart, may contemn and despise all worldly things, and set his mind wholly upon heavenly things, hoping for them with a strong and undoubted faith. Again, let it not grieve him, O sweet Saviour, to be loosened from this vile and wretched carcase, which is now so full of sorrow, trouble, anguish, sickness, and pain, but rather let him have a bent and ready will, through thy goodness, to put it off. Yea, and that with this faith, that he, at the last day, shall receive it again in a much better state than it is now, or ever was from the day of his birth; even a body incorruptible, immortal, and like to thy glorious body. Let his whole heart and mind be set only upon thee. Let the remembrance of the joys of heaven be so fervent in his breast, that he may both patiently and thankfully take his death, and ever wish to be with thee in glory. And when the time cometh that he shall yield to nature, and depart from this miserable world, vouchsafe, we most humbly beseech thee, O Lord Jesus, to take his soul into thy hands, and to place it among the glorious company of thy holy angels and blessed saints, and to keep it unto that most joyful day of the general resurrection, that both his body and soul, through thine almighty power, being knit again together at that day, he may for ever and ever enjoy thy glorious kingdom, and sing perpetual praises to thy blessed name. Amen.

A Thanksgiving unto God for the departure of the Faithful out of this World.

O most loving Father, how can we render unto thee sufficient thanks for thine inestimable goodness toward thy faithful servants, whom thou, calling out of

this wretched world, vouchsafest to place in thy heavenly kingdom among the glorious company of thy holy angels and blessed saints? Oh full precious is the death of the faithful in thy sight! Blessed are the dead who die in thee, O Lord! For they are at rest from their painful travails and labours. The souls of the righteous are in thy hand, O God, and the pain of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they appear to die, but they are in peace. They are as the stars, world without end. They are as angels of God. They are clad with white garments, and have golden crowns upon their heads. They do service day and night before the glorious throne of thy divine majesty. They neither hunger nor thirst any more; neither doth the sun or any heat fall upon them, for the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, governeth them, and leadeth them unto the living fountains of waters. They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They have such joys, as eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, neither is there any heart able to think them. Infinite and unspeakable are the treasures, O Lord, which thou hast laid up for them who die in the faith. For these thy fatherly benefits towards the souls of the faithful; and for that it hath pleased thee to call our christian brethren and sisters from this vale of misery unto thy heavenly kingdom, we give unto thee most hearty thanks; humbly beseeching thee that thou wilt take like care of us, and so govern us with thy Holy Spirit, both in sickness and in health, that we may live a good and godly life in this present world, and whensoever it shall be thy good pleasure to call us hence, we may with strong faith in thee, and in thy Son Christ Jesus our Lord, commend both our bodies and souls into thy merciful hands, and through thy goodness be placed in thy glorious kingdom, among thy faithful chosen people, and so for ever and ever praise and magnify thee our heavenly Father; to whom, with thy dearly-

beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and the Holy Ghost, the most sweet Comforter, be all glory and honour, world without end. Amen.

A Prayer to be said before the Sermon.

Thy word, O Lord, is a lantern unto our feet, and a light to our pathways. For it showeth unto us evidently how we ought to walk, and turn neither on the right hand nor on the left, but even that way which thou hast appointed, that we may live and please thee. Thy law also is a perfect and undefiled law, it turneth souls, and giveth wisdom even unto babes. Thy statutes are right, and rejoyce the heart, thy commandment is pure and giveth light unto the eyes. Through thy word, which thou hast left here among us, are we made clean; for it is thy power unto salvation to every one that believeth. To hear this thy word, which is sweeter than the honey or honeycomb, and more precious than gold, pearls, or precious stones, we are come hither at this present, O most merciful Father, desiring thee to send both to thy preacher and to us, thy Holy Spirit, that he may teach nothing but thy pure word and the glorious gospel of thy most dear Son; again, that we may diligently note and repose in our memory, whatsoever shall be godly and truly spoken of him. And forasmuch as neither he that planteth nor he that watereth is any thing, but thou, O God, who givest the increase, we most entirely pray thee, that the seed of thy blessed word, which shall now be sown among us, may fall into our hearts as into a good ground, and by no means be choked up of thorns, nor dried up for want of moisture, nor yet be carried away of the birds of the air; but through the working of the Holy Ghost, so take root in our hearts, that it may

bring forth plenty of good fruit, unto thy glory and the health of our souls. Amen.

A Thanksgiving after the Sermon.

We render unto thee, O heavenly Father, most hearty thanks for this spiritual and heavenly nourishment of thy blessed word, wherewith our souls are not only well refreshed at this present, but also our faith is strengthened, our love is kindled, and our consciences quieted. We most humbly beseech thee to give us grace, not only to be hearers of the word, but doers also of the same; not only to love, but also to live thy gospel; not only to favour, but also to follow thy godly doctrine; not only to profess, but also to practise thy blessed commandments; that whatsoever we outwardly hear, or inwardly believe, we may show forth the same in our conversation and living, unto the honour of thy holy name, the comfort of our Christian brethren, and the health of our souls. Amen.

A Prayer to be said before the receiving of the Holy Communion.

Thy love towards us, O most gentle Saviour, is so great and immeasurable, that it can by no means be expressed by mouth, nor sufficiently conceived in heart. For love to us, without any deserts on our behalf, freely and willingly, at thy heavenly Father's commandment, thou didst come down from the glorious seat of thy divine Majesty: thou didst take very flesh, and become perfect man, of the substance of the pure and undefiled virgin Mary, through the operation of the Holy Ghost; thou didst teach the will of thy heavenly Father, confirming the same with wonderful miracles, unto the great comfort of many who then lived, and unto the perfect establishment

of our faith who live at this present. After thou hadst endured affliction in this world certain years, the time fore-appointed from everlasting of thy heavenly Father drawing nigh, that thou wouldest give thyself an oblation and sweet-smelling sacrifice to God the Father for the sins of the whole world, even so many as repent, believe, and amend ; willing that so noble and worthy a benefit of our redemption should not be forgotten, nor fall out of remembrance, which is the only anchor of ~~our~~ salvation, and the only comfort of weak consciences ; when thou hadst eaten the paschal lamb with thy disciples, according to the appointment of the law, thou didst take bread into thy hand, gavest thanks to thy heavenly Father, brakedst it, and deliveredst it to thy disciples, saying "Take ye, eat ye, this is my body, which is betrayed for you ; do this in the remembrance of me."

Because the inestimable benefit of our redemption, brought to pass by the one and only oblation of thy blessed body, should not be forgotten, thou brakedst bread in the sight of thy disciples, and gavest it unto them, commanding them to eat it in remembrance of the breaking of thy body, which then was betrayed by thy traitorous disciple Judas, the son of perdition, and which the day following was truly broken on the cross for our ransom, deliverance, and salvation. Here didst thou appoint the breaking of the bread among the faithful, gathered together for the purpose, a worthy and blessed memorial of thy body broken. And because the breaking of thy body should be the better remembered, thou didst ennoble the bread with the name of thy body, when, notwithstanding, it was only the figure, sign, token, and memorial of thy holy body. In like manner, when supper was done, thou didst take the cup into thy hand, gavest thanks to thy heavenly Father, and deliveredst it to thy disciples, saying, "Drink of this, all ye. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for

many, for the remission of sins. This do, as often as ye drink it, in the remembrance of me."

O most merciful Redeemer and gentle Saviour, we are come together at this present to celebrate the memorial of thy blessed and glorious passion, and to eat and drink this bread and wine, in the remembrance of thy blessed body-breaking, and thy precious blood-shedding, most humbly and from the very heart beseeching thee to give us grace worthily to eat this bread and drink of this cup, lest by the unworthy receiving of them we be guilty of thy body and blood; and so eat and drink our own condemnation. And that we may come the more worthily unto this thy table, grant, we most entirely pray thee, that we may so earnestly be at defiance with all sins, and so inwardly be ashamed that we at any time have so grievously offended thy divine Majesty, by attempting anything that is not agreeable to thy good pleasure, that from henceforth we may not only loath, detest, and abhor whatever is displeasing unto thee, but also embrace and lay hand on that which is good and acceptable in thy sight. Forgive us all our sins, and give us grace, even with our whole heart, to love all men, yea, our very enemies; and not only to forgive all such as have offended us, but also to be ready at all times, to do for them whatsoever good or pleasure we are able. And that we may be the more welcome unto thee, and be found meet and worthy guests to sit at this thy table, and to eat of these thy blessed gifts, that our souls may be well comforted, nourished, fed, and made joyful by the worthy receiving of them, clothe us, we pray thee, with that wedding garment, even true and lively faith, wherewith our hearts are purified, wherewith we are married unto thee and made one flesh and one blood with thee; wherewith we are justified and counted righteous in thy sight. And grant that through the same faith we may earnestly set the eyes of our minds on these

thy most sweet and loving promises, My body shall be broken for you ; my blood shall be shed for you. And this without any doubting for remission of all our sins at thy heavenly Father's hand, according to thy most gentle promises, yea, and that not for our good deeds or merits, which in this behalf are none, but for the worthiness of thy blessed passion, for the dignity of thy precious blood, and for the only and alone sacrifice of thy holy body. For that, O Lord, is the salve which healeth our souls. That is the medicine which comforteth our weak and troubled consciences. That is the living bread ; whosoever eateth of that bread shall never hunger, but live for ever. That is the jewel of joy which maketh our sorrowful hearts rejoice. That is the mighty bulwark, the strong defence, the sure fortress, that preserveth and keepeth us harmless against Satan, sin, death, hell, desperation, and all the infernal powers.

To come to the table, to be present at the supper, to hear and see what is there done, yea, and to receive the holy mysteries of thy body and blood there set forth unto us, profit us nothing at all if we faithfully believe not that thy body was broken, and thy blood shed, for our sins, and that by the alone oblation thereof, done once for all, our sins are forgiven us, thy heavenly Father reconciled unto us, his wrath, stirred up through sin against us, is pacified, quietness of conscience and everlasting life are given us ; but it rather turneth to our damnation, because we eat of this bread and drink of this cup unworthily ; and shall with that hypocrite who presumed to come unto the marriage, not having the wedding garment, be bound hand and foot, and cast into utter darkness, where weeping and gnashing of teeth shall be. Therefore, we most humbly beseech thee to give us grace, according to thy holy apostle's counsel, diligently to try, prove, and examine ourselves, whether such repentance, such faith, such love, such dis-

position towards all godliness, be found in us, or not, as thou dost require of them who will come worthily and with profit unto thy table. And, forasmuch as it is thy gift to repent heartily, to believe truly, to love unfeignedly, and to be disposed earnestly to embrace true godliness, and to go forward in the same, from virtue to virtue unto the end; grant, we most entirely pray thee, we may so repent, that the fruits of repentance may be found in us; so believe, that we may acknowledge thee our alone Saviour; so love, that all our affection may be set on thee alone; and so embrace true godliness that our whole life may be a clear mirror of all virtue and goodness. So shall we, through thy mercy, be found worthy guests of this thy table, and receive these holy mysteries unto the salvation of our souls; yea, so shall we be well assured of the remission and forgiveness of all our sins, by the breaking of thy blessed body, and the shedding of thy precious blood; our consciences shall be quiet, our hearts shall be filled with all true and spiritual joy; we shall triumph over Satan, sin, death, hell, and desperation; we shall be partakers of all the fruits and merits of thy blessed passion, and be made one body with thee, and fellow-heirs of everlasting glory. O Lord God, let it so come to pass for the honour of thy name. Amen.

A short Prayer to be said at the receiving of the mystery of Christ's body in the holy Communion.

O heavenly and blessed Father, I render unto thee most hearty thanks for all thy benefits which thou hast showed unto me, most wretched sinner, but especially for that most sweet-smelling sacrifice, which thy only begotten Son offered unto thee on the altar of the cross, by giving his most pure and undefiled body unto the death, for the redemption of mankind; in remembrance whereof, according to

thy well-beloved Son's ordinance, I now receive this holy bread, most entirely beseeching thee that I may both be partaker of the merits of thy dear Son's body-breaking, and also lead a life worthy of so great a benefit, unto the glory of thy name. Amen.

A Prayer to be said at the receiving of the mystery of Christ's blood in the holy Communion.

O blessed and merciful Father, thy love toward me, sinful creature, is so exceeding great and unspeakable, that I cannot but give unto thee most humble thanks, for the shedding of the most precious blood of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, by the virtue whereof, thy wrath stirred up against me, wretched sinner, is pacified, my ransom is paid, the law is fulfilled, my enemies are overcome and put to flight. In remembrance of this so noble a victory, and of so great a benefit, I am come unto this thy table, O merciful Father, to drink of this cup; desiring thee, that as my outward man is comforted by the drinking of this wine, so likewise my inward man may be comforted and made strong, by true faith in the precious blood of thy most dearly-beloved Son. O Lord, and my heavenly Father, give me thy Holy Spirit, which may so rule and govern my heart, that I may never be unthankful, nor forgetful of this thine exceeding great kindness, but so train my life according to thy blessed will, that whatsoever I do, speak, or think, may be unto the glory of thy blessed name, and the health of my soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Thanksgiving after the receiving of the Communion.

We thank thee, O heavenly Father, for the blessed passion and glorious death of thy dearly-beloved Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; by whom,

and by whose holy wounds, we faithfully believe and are assuredly persuaded that thy wrath is not only pacified towards us, but that thou art also now become our most merciful Father, and hast freely forgiven all our sins, restored unto us thy heavenly grace, and made us sons and heirs of thy eternal glory. And because we should not doubt of thy fatherly goodness towards us, set forth in the death of thy Son, the same thy Son Christ Jesus our Lord hath left unto us, not only his holy word, but also a blessed memorial of his death and passion, set forth in the holy bread and holy wine which we at this present have received, both for the remembrance of the breaking of his blessed body, and the shedding of his most precious blood, and also for the quietness of our conscience, and for the assurance of the remission of our sins through faith. We beseech thee, O heavenly Father, that we be never unmindful of this thy exceeding great kindness, nor unthankful for thy manifold and unspeakable mercies declared unto us in the glorious death of thy well-beloved Son; but so work thou in us through thy Holy Spirit, that we may be made worthy members of that body, whereof thy Son and our Saviour Jesus Christ is the Head. And grant, that we may so faithfully believe in thee, and so fervently love one another, always living in thy fear, and in the obedience of thy holy law and blessed will, that we being fruitful in all godly and christian works, may train our life according to thy good pleasure in this transitory world, and after this frail and short life obtain the true and immortal life, where thou, with thy dearly-beloved Son our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, that most sweet Comforter, livest and reignest one true God, in all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

SELECTION FROM GODLY PRAYERS; OR, PRAYERS
FOR THE USE OF PRIVATE DEVOTION; AT ONE
TIME SENT FORTH, UNDER THAT TITLE, WITH THE
BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

A Prayer containing the duty of every true Christian.

O most mighty God; merciful and loving Father; I wretched sinner come unto thee in the name of thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, my only Saviour and Redeemer; and I most humbly beseech thee for his sake, to be merciful unto me; and to cast all my sins out of thy sight and remembrance, through the merits of his bloody death and passion. Pour upon me, O Lord, thy Holy Spirit of wisdom and grace. Govern and lead me by thy holy word; that it may be a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my steps. Shew thy mercy upon me; and so lighten the natural blindness and darkness of my heart through thy grace, that I may daily be renewed by the same Spirit and grace. Purge also, O Lord, by the same Spirit, the grossness of my hearing and understanding; that I may profitably read, hear, and understand thy word and heavenly will; believe and practise the same in my life and conversation; and evermore hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life.

Mortify and kill all vice in me; that my life may express my faith in thee. Mercifully hear the humble suit of thy servant; and grant me thy peace all my days. Graciously pardon mine infirmities; and defend me in all dangers of body, goods, and name; but chiefly defend my soul against all assaults, temptations, accusations, baits, and snares of that old enemy

of mankind, Satan, that roaring lion, ever seeking whom he may devour.

And here, O Lord, I, prostrate with most humble mind, crave of thy divine Majesty to be merciful unto the universal Church of thy Son Christ: and especially according to my bounden duty, beseech thee, for his sake, to bless, save, and defend a principal member thereof, even thy servant, our sovereign Lord, King William; increase in his heart true faith, godly zeal, and love of the same; and grant him victory over all his enemies; a long, prosperous, and honourable life upon earth; a blessed end, and life everlasting.

Moreover, O Lord, grant unto his Majesty's counsellors, and every other member of this thy Church of England, that they and we in our several callings, may truly and godly serve thee. Plant in our hearts true fear and honour of thy name; obedience to our prince; and love to our neighbour. Increase in us true faith and religion. Replenish our minds with all goodness; and of thy great mercy keep us in the same, till the end of our lives. Give unto us a godly zeal in prayer, true humility in prosperity, perfect patience in adversity, and continual joy in the Holy Ghost.

And lastly, I commend unto thy fatherly protection all that thou hast given me, *as wife, children, and servants*. Aid me, O Lord, that I may govern, nourish, and bring them up in thy fear and service. And forasmuch as in this world I must always be at war and strife, not with one sort of enemies, but with an infinite number: not only with flesh and blood, but with the devil, which is the prince of darkness, and with wicked men, executors of his most sinful will, grant me therefore thy grace, that being armed with thy defence, I may stand in this battle with an invincible constancy against all corruption, which I am compassed with on every side; until such time as having ended the combat

which during this life I must sustain, in the end I may attain to thy heavenly rest: which is prepared for me and all thine elect, through Christ our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

A General Confession of Sins, to be said every morning.

Oh, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, I confess and acknowledge that "I am a miserable and a wretched sinner, and have manifold ways most grievously transgressed thy most godly commandments through wicked thoughts, ungodly lusts, sinful words and deeds, committed all my whole life. In sin am I born and conceived: and there is no goodness in me: inasmuch as if thou shouldest enter into thy extreme judgment with me, judging me according unto the same, I were never able to suffer and abide it; but must needs perish and be condemned for ever: so little help, comfort, or succour is there either in me, or in any other creature. Only this is my comfort, O heavenly Father, that thou didst not spare thy only dear beloved Son; but didst give Him up unto the most bitter, and most vile and slanderous death of the cross for me: that he might so pay the ransom for my sins; satisfy thy judgment; still and pacify thy wrath: reconcile me again unto thee; and purchase me thy grace, and favour, and everlasting life. Wherefore through the merit of his most bitter death and passion, and through his innocent blood-shedding, I beseech thee, O heavenly Father, that thou wilt vouchsafe to be gracious and merciful unto me; to forgive and pardon me all my sins; to enlighten my heart with thy Holy Spirit; to renew, confirm, and strengthen me, with a right and perfect faith; and to fill me with sincere love toward thee and my neighbour; that I may henceforth, with a willing and glad heart, walk as it

becometh me, in thy most godly commandments; and so glorify and praise thee everlastingly. And also that I may, with a free conscience and quiet heart, in all manner of temptations, afflictions, or necessities, and even in the very pangs of death, cry boldly and cheerfully unto thee, and say,

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth :

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord ; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried ; He descended into hell ; The third day he rose again from the dead : He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost ; The Holy Catholic Church ; The Communion of Saints ; The Forgiveness of Sins ; The Resurrection of the Body, And the Life everlasting. Amen.

But, O Lord God heavenly Father, to comfort myself in affliction and temptation with these Articles of the Christian Faith, it is not in my power ; for faith is thy gift. And forasmuch as thou wilt be prayed unto, and called upon for it, I come unto thee, to pray and beseech thee, both for that and for all other my necessities, even as thy dear beloved Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, himself hath taught us. And from the very bottom of my heart I cry and say,

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name ; Thy Kingdom come ; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven : Give us this day our daily bread ; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us ; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil : For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

Prayers to be said in the Morning.

O merciful Lord God, heavenly Father, I render most high laud, praise, and thanks unto thee; that thou hast preserved me both this night, and all the times and days of my life hitherto, under thy protection; and hast suffered me to live until this present hour. And I beseech thee heartily, that thou wilt vouchsafe to receive me this day, and the residue of my whole life, from henceforth unto thy good keeping; ruling, and governing me, with thy Holy Spirit; that all manner of darkness of unbelief, infidelity, and of carnal lusts and affections, may be utterly chased and driven out of my heart; and that I may be justified and saved, both body and soul, through a right and perfect faith; and so walk in the light of thy most godly truth, to thy glory and praise, and to the profit and furtherance of my neighbour, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

All possible thanks that we are able, we render unto thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, for that thou hast willed, this night past, to be prosperous unto us. And we beseech thee, likewise, to prosper all this same day unto us, for thy glory, and for the health of our souls; and that thou, which art the true light, not knowing any going down, and which art the Sun eternal, giving life, food, and gladness unto all things, wouldest vouchsafe to shine into our minds; that we may not any where stumble, to fall into any sin; but may, through thy good guiding and conducting, come to the life everlasting. Amen.

O Lord Jesus Christ, which art the true sun of the world, evermore rising, and never going down;

which by thy most wholesome appearing and sight, dost bring forth, preserve, nourish, and refresh all things as well that are in heaven, as also that are on earth: we beseech thee mercifully and favourably to shine into our hearts, that the night and darkness of sin, and the mists of error on every side being driven away, thou brightly shining within our hearts, we may all our life space go without any stumbling or offence; and may honestly, and seemly walk, as in the day time; being pure and clean from the works of darkness; and abounding in all good works which God hath prepared for us to walk in; which with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

O God and Lord, Jesus Christ, thou knowest, yea, and hast also taught us, how great the infirmity and weakness of man is; and how certain a thing it is that he can do nothing without thy good help. If man trust to himself, he must run headlong, and fall into a thousand undoings and mischiefs. O our Father: have thou pity and compassion upon the weakness of us, thy children; be thou willing and ready to help us; always showing thy mercy upon us; and prospering whatsoever we godly go about; so that, thou giving us light, we may see what things are truly good indeed; thou encouraging us, we may have an earnest desire to the same; and thou being our guide, we may come where to obtain them; for we, having nothing but mistrust in ourselves, do yield and commit ourselves, full and whole, unto thee alone, which workest all things in all creatures to thy honour and glory. So be it.

A Prayer against Temptation.

O Lord Jesus Christ; the only stay and fence of our mortal state; our only hope; our only salvation;

our glory ; and our triumph ; who in the flesh (which thou hadst for our only cause taken upon thee) didst suffer thyself to be tempted of Satan ; and who only, and alone, didst utterly overcome and vanquish sin, death, the world, the devil, and all the kingdom of hell : and whatsoever thou hast so overcome, for our behoof it is that thou hast overcome it ; neither hath it been thy will to have any of thy servants to keep battle or fight with any of the fore-said evils, but of purpose to reward us with a crown of the more glory for it. "And to the intent, that thou mightest likewise overthrow Satan in thy members, as thou hadst afore done in thine own person, give thou, we beseech thee, unto us thy soldiers, O Lion most victorious of the tribe of Judah, strength against the roaring lion which continually wandereth to and fro, seeking whom he may devour. Thou, of whose power to heal the venomous serpent's bite, the serpent lifted up in the wilderness was a sign ; that men might know thee to be the true giver of health and life, that wast nailed on high upon a tree : Give unto us thy simple ones, wiliness against the deceitful awaiting of the most subtile serpent. Thou being a Lamb, spotless as snow ; the vanquisher of Satan's tyranny ; give unto us thy weak sheep, the strength and virtue of thy Spirit ; that being in our own selves weak and feeble, and in thee strong and valiant, we may withstand and overcome all assaults of the devil, so that our ghostly enemy may not glory on us ; but he being conquered through thee, we may give thanks to thy mercy, which never leavest them destitute that put their trust in thee, who livest and reignest, God for ever. Amen.

A Prayer necessary for all persons.

Oh merciful God ; I, a wretched sinner, acknowledge myself bound to keep thy holy commandments ;

but yet unable to perform them, and to be accepted for just, without the righteousness of Jesus Christ, thy only Son ; who hath perfectly fulfilled thy law, to justify all men that believe and trust in him. Therefore, grant me grace, I beseech thee, to be occupied in doing good works, which thou commandest in Holy Scripture, all the days of my life, to thy glory ; and yet, to trust only in thy mercy, and in Christ's merits, to be purged from my sins, and not in my good works, be they never so many. Give me grace to love thy holy word fervently ; to search the Scriptures diligently ; to read them humbly ; to understand them truly ; to live after them effectually. Order my life so, O Lord, that it may be alway acceptable unto thee. Give me grace not to rejoice in any thing that displeaseth thee ; but evermore to delight in those things that please thee, be they never so contrary to my desires. Teach me so to pray, that my petitions may be graciously heard of thee. Keep me upright among diversities of opinions and judgments in the world ; that I never swerve from thy truth, taught in Holy Scripture. In prosperity, O Lord, save me ; that I wax not proud. In adversity help me, that I neither despair, nor blaspheme thy holy name ; but taking it patiently, let me give thee thanks, and trust to be delivered after thy pleasure. When I happen to fall into sin, through frailty, I beseech thee to work true repentance in my heart ; that I may be sorry without desperation, and trust in thy mercy without presumption, that I may amend my life, and become truly religious without hypocrisy ; lowly in heart without feigning ; faithful and trusty without deceit ; cheerful without lightness ; sad without mistrust ; sober without slothfulness ; content with mine own without covetousness ; to tell my neighbour his faults charitably, without dissimulation ; to instruct my household in thy laws truly ; to obey our king, and all governors under him, unfeignedly ; to receive all laws and

common ordinances (which disagree not from thy holy word) obediently ; to pay every man truly that which I owe unto him ; to backbite no man ; nor slander my neighbour secretly ; and to abhor all vice, loving all goodness earnestly. O Lord, grant me thus to do for the glory of thy holy name. Amen.

A Prayer for Patience in Trouble.

How hast thou, O Lord, humbled and plucked me down. I dare now scarcely make my prayers unto thee ; for thou art angry with me ; but not without my deserving. Certainly, I have sinned. Lord, I confess it : I will not deny it. But, O my God, pardon my trespasses ; release my debts ; render now, again, thy grace unto me. O Lord, give me grace, notwithstanding, to abide this trouble patiently, and to wait upon thee continually, hoping for relief at thy hand ; and that not without reason, for I have received a token of thy favour and grace toward me ; I mean thy word of promise concerning Christ, who for me was offered on the cross for a ransom, a sacrifice and price for my sins. Wherefore, according to that thy promise, defend me, Lord, by thy right hand ; and give a gracious ear to my requests, for all man's stays are but vain. Beat down, therefore, mine enemies thine ownself, with thy power, which art my only aider and protector, O Lord God Almighty. Amen.

A Prayer to be said at night, going to bed.

O merciful Lord God ; heavenly Father ; whether we sleep or wake, live or die, we are always thine. Wherefore, I beseech thee, heartily, that thou wilt

vouchsafe to take care and charge of me; and not to suffer me to perish in the works of darkness; but to kindle the light of thy countenance in my heart; that thy godly knowledge may daily increase in me, through a right and pure faith; and that I may always be found to walk, and live after thy will and pleasure, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

A Prayer for the use of one whose death seems nigh at hand.

O Lord Jesus, which art the only health of all men living; and the everlasting life of them that die in faith; I wretched sinner, give and submit myself wholly unto thy most blessed will. And being sure that the thing cannot perish which is committed unto thy mercy, willingly now I leave this frail and wicked flesh; in hope of the resurrection, which in better wise shall restore it unto me again. I beseech thee, most merciful Lord Jesus Christ, that thou wilt, by thy grace, make strong my soul against all temptation; and that thou wilt cover, and defend me, with the buckler of thy mercy against all the assaults of the devil. I see, and acknowledge, that there is in myself no help of salvation; but all my confidence, hope, and trust, is in thy most merciful goodness. I have no merits, nor good works, which I may allege before thee. Of sins and evil works, alas! I see a great heap; but through thy mercy, I trust to be in the number of them to whom thou wilt not impute their sins; but take, and accept me, for righteous and just, and to be the inheritor of everlasting life. Thou, merciful Lord, wast born for my sake; thou didst suffer both hunger and thirst for my sake; thou didst all good works and deeds

for my sake ; thou sufferedst most grievous pains and torments for my sake ; and, finally, thou gavest thy most precious body to die, and thy blood to be shed on the cross for my sake. Now, most merciful Saviour, let all these things profit me, which thou freely hast given me, that hast given thyself for me. Let thy blood cleanse and wash away the spots and foulness of my sins. Let thy righteousness hide and cover mine unrighteousness. Let the merits of thy passion and blood be the satisfaction for my sins. Give me, Lord, thy grace ; that my faith in salvation through thy blood waver not in me, but be ever firm and constant ; that the hope of thy mercy, and of life everlasting, never decay in me ; that love wax not cold in me ; finally, that the weakness of my flesh be not overcome with the fear of death. Grant me, merciful Saviour, that when death hath shut up the eyes of my body, the eyes of my soul may still behold and look upon thee ; that when death hath taken away the use of my tongue and speech, my heart may still cry and say unto thee, O Lord, into thy hands I give and commit my soul. Lord Jesus, receive my soul unto thee ! Amen.

THE END.

THE
POOR MAN'S PRESERVATIVE
AGAINST THE
ERRORS OF ROMANISM:

ADDRESSED TO THE
LOWER CLASSES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND
IRELAND.

BY THE
REV. JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE,
FORMERLY CHAPLAIN TO THE KING OF SPAIN, IN THE ROYAL CHAPEL OF
VALLE. NOW A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.



NEW EDITION,
CORRECTED, AND CONSIDERABLY ALTERED BY THE AUTHOR.

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THE
AUTHOR'S ADDRESS
TO THE READER

IN 1831.

FIVE or six years have passed without my looking into this little work of mine; and I am glad of this, because, having allowed my mind entirely to cool upon the subject, I find that I can pass judgment upon the work as impartially as if it had been written by another person. The occasion of this revision has been presented by a request of Messrs. Milliken and Son, of Dublin, that I would allow them to print and publish an edition of the present work. I have not only granted that request, but, wishing to increase the usefulness of the *Poor Man's Preservative* to the best of my knowledge and the utmost of my power, I have taken the trouble of correcting and altering every part in which I thought I discovered some fault. The alterations which I have made are considerable. But, as in matters of fact I always have had strict accuracy for my guide, my *statements* remain exactly the same as they have appeared in the preceding editions.

Nor will it be found that I have changed my *opinions*; though, had that been the case, I should not feel the least shame to confess it. The opinions (I repeat) which I brought from Spain in regard to the *tendencies* of the Roman Catholic doctrines, remain the same.

But my practical knowledge of the modifications which *tendencies* arising from *religious opinions*, are apt to receive from external circumstances, has greatly increased. I now perceive that the profession of the most *liberal religious doctrines* is not a complete security against religious persecution, though it must contribute gradually to make way for *real toleration*—the *toleration* which proceeds from Christian *love* and *humility*; not the grudging toleration which proceeds from *selfishness*, or, at the best, from the fear of an *intolerance* more powerful, and more narrow, than our own. In like manner, I am now persuaded, that the most *intolerant* principles may lose a great part of their bitterness, when *circumstances*, rather than the will of man, prevent, for a long time, their practical application, and make them recoil, to a certain extent, on those who profess them.

I have still something to add about *myself*. Such is, indeed, the natural right of those who find themselves unjustly abused and calumniated. Though at an immense distance from the apostle Paul, I have thought it my duty, as that great man did, in regard to himself, to support my character of *conscientious disinterestedness* by every possible sacrifice of temporal advantages. And I thank God that I may say with Paul, “As the truth is in Christ, no man shall stop me of this boasting.” Not only has not the circumstance of my having been a clergyman of the Church of England, for many years, procured me any pecuniary advantage, but it is also well known to many of my friends, (whom I chose for witnesses) that when, eight years ago, my works on Romanism brought me into high *repute* with many who were able to advance

me in the world, I took a solemn resolution never to accept any kind of church preferment.

In regard to this work, the circulation of which has been very extensive, I feel it a duty to the cause which it supports, to state, that I have given leave to print and distribute it, to every one who has asked for that permission. As, before the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge had accepted my offer of a right to reprint the "*Poor Man's Preservative*" as often as they wished, four editions had been sold by Messrs. Rivington, of London, and the balance due to me amounted to *one hundred pounds*, I ordered *fifty pounds* to be given to the same Society, and the other *fifty pounds* to the Society for *Building and Repairing Churches*. I have, besides, paid for whatever copies I have taken for distribution.

Finally, I entreat the Roman Catholics, who may venture to read this book, to believe that, in spite of the great evils which the intolerance of their church (as it exists in my native country) has inflicted upon me, I acknowledge as brethren all who, under any *denomination whatever*, "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity¹."

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

Dublin, February 21, 1834.

¹ Eph. vi. 24.

TO THE READER.

MY FRIEND,

WHOEVER you may be who happen to take up this book, if you belong to that numerous and respectable class who cannot afford to employ a great part of their time in reading, and have not the means of buying expensive books—it is for *you* that I have written the one which you now hold in your hands.

Who I am, I will tell you presently; for I mean, by your favour, to hold a pretty long conversation with you; but let me speak first about this little book. I wrote, a few months ago, a work on the Roman Catholic religion, which, as I hear from the booksellers, has had a good sale among the rich. I might, indeed, rest satisfied with this success, if, even at the time when I was working hard with my pen, a whisper within had not said to me—"Are you sure that the prospect of gain or praise is not the real cause of all this labour?"—"I am well aware," said I, "that *the heart is deceitful above all things*¹, and that, conscious as I feel of the purity of my motives, yet something may be wrong in them. I will, however, with God's blessing, if this book should be well received, write another for the poor. I will give it away to be printed for them at the cheapest rate, and will make no profit at all by it. I will take care, besides, that it contain, in a small compass, more than my work for the higher classes; and it shall be written in a manner that will

¹ Jeremiah xvii. 9.

require no learning to be well understood." My book, as I have told you already, was published, and the great people were pleased to say that I had proved my point. Then letters came to me from some very worthy gentlemen, urging me to print a cheaper edition of my work, that it might be within the power of the poor to buy it. I was thankful, indeed, for this advice: but my mind had been previously made up to go beyond it. It cheered me up, however, and I immediately set about composing this little work on purpose for *you*.

But when I took up the pen, I had to consider in what manner I could best afford you both instruction and entertainment. After casting many schemes in my mind, it appeared to me, that by imagining myself sitting by your side, and entering into a conversation upon the subject which I propose to treat, I should make the reading of this book less tiresome, than if I wrote in the usual way, and had all the talk to myself, in set chapters. I mean, therefore, to give you a share in the composition of the work itself: and though it is impossible for me to guess exactly what you would say if we were conversing together, I hope that the questions and remarks which I shall put in your mouth, will be such as you would not be sorry to have used, and not very unlike those which your own mind would suggest.

Let us then, if you please, begin our first conversation, or *Dialogue*; in which you will bear the name of *Reader*, and myself that of *Author*: and may God bless the result to both of us!

Chelsea, July, 1825.

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DIALOGUE I.

Containing an Account of the Author; how the Errors of the Roman Catholic Church made him an Infidel; and how, to avoid her Tyranny, he came to England, where he returned to Christianity.

Reader. WELL, Sir, since you are pleased to wish for a conversation with me, may I make bold to ask who you are?

Author. By all means, my good friend. The truth is, that, unless you know who I am, and by what strange and unforeseen events I happen to be here, our conversation would be to little purpose. You must, then, know, in the first place, that I am a Spaniard, and have been regularly bred and ordained a Catholic Priest.

R. Indeed, Sir! Perhaps you are one of those poor creatures, who, I hear, have been driven out of Spain, for having tried to give it a better government?

A. No, my friend: I have been now (1825) more than fifteen years in England, and came hither of my own accord, though I left behind every thing that was most dear to me, besides very good preferment in the Church, and the prospect of rising to higher places of honour and emolument.

R. Why, Sir! that appears strange.

A. So it must to those who are not acquainted with the evil from which I resolved to escape, at the cost of every thing I possessed in the world. You, my dear friend, have had your lot cast in a better country. Were it possible for you to have been born in Spain, and yet to possess the free spirit of a *Briton*, you would not wonder at the determination which made me quit parents, kindred, friends, wealth, and country, and cast myself upon the world at large, at the

age of five and thirty, trusting to my own exertions for a maintenance. All this I did merely to escape from *religious tyranny*.

R. You quite surprise me, Sir! But I wish you would tell me what it is you mean by that *religious tyranny*, which you seem to have feared and hated so strongly.

A. You will easily understand it as I proceed with the story of my own life. I was born of gentle parents, and brought up with great care and tenderness. My father's family were Irish, and the English language being spoken by him and many of his dependents, I learned it when a boy; and thanks to that circumstance, which I consider as a means employed by Providence for my future good, I can now thus freely converse with you. Both my father and mother were Roman Catholics, extremely pious from their youth, and devoted to works of charity and piety during the whole course of their lives. It was natural that such good parents should educate their children in the most religious manner; and they spared themselves no pains to make me a good Roman Catholic. My disposition was not wayward; and I grew up strongly attached to the religion which was instilled into my mind. I had scarcely arrived at my fourteenth year, when, believing that the life in which I could most please God was that of a clergyman, I asked my parents to prepare me for the church; which they agreed to with great joy. I passed many years at the university, took my degrees, and, at the age of five and twenty, was made a priest. It is the custom in Spain, when certain places become vacant in cathedrals, and other great churches, to invite as many clergymen as will allow themselves to be examined, before the public, to stand candidates for the vacancy. After the trial of their learning, the judges appointed by law choose the person whom they believe to be most competent. I should be ashamed to boast, but it so happened, that, soon after my becoming a priest, I was made one of the chaplains of the king of Spain, in the

way I have just told you. All had been, hitherto, well enough with me ; and I thank God that the ease and good fortune which had always attended me, did not make me forget my duties as a clergyman. Doubts, however, had before occurred to me as to whether the Roman Catholic religion was true. My fear of doing wrong by listening to them made me hush them for a long time ; but now all my peace of mind was gone. In vain did I kneel and pray : the doubts would multiply upon me, disturbing all my devotions. Thus I struggled month after month, till, unable to answer the objections that continually occurred to me, I renounced the Roman Catholic religion in my heart.

R. In your *heart*, Sir ! I hope you do not mean that when you had settled with yourself that the Roman Catholic religion was false, you pretended still to be a Roman Catholic.

A. What would you think of a power or authority, that would force you to act against your religious opinions, and to profess publicly as true what you were convinced to be false ?

R. I should say that such a government taught people to be deceivers.

A. Well ; now you will be able to understand what I mean by *religious tyranny*. The popes of Rome believe that they have a right to oblige all men who have been baptized, but more especially those who have been baptized by their priests, to continue (outwardly at least) Roman Catholics to their lives' end. Whenever any one living under their authority has ventured to deny any of the doctrines which the church of Rome believes, they have shut him up in prison, tormented him upon the rack, and, if he would not recant, and unsay what he had given out as his real persuasion, the poor wretch has been burnt alive. The kings of Spain, being Roman Catholics, acted upon these matters according to the will of the pope ; and, in order to prevent every Spaniard from being any thing, at least in appearance, but a Ro-

manist, had established a court called the *Inquisition*, where a certain number of priests tried, in secret, such people as were accused of having denied any of the articles of the Roman Catholic faith. Whenever, moved by fear of the consequences, the prisoner chose to eat his own words, and declare that he was wrong, the priests sent him to do penance for a certain time, or laid a heavy fine upon him : but, if the accused had courage to persist in his own opinion, then the priests declared that he was a heretic, and gave him up to the public executioner, to be burnt alive.

R. You quite astonish me. Have you ever seen such doings, Sir ?

A. I well remember the last person who was burnt for being a heretic, in my own town, which is called *Seville*. It was a poor blind woman. I was then about eight years old, and saw the pile of wood, laid upon barrels of pitch and tar, where she was reduced to ashes.

R. But are there many who venture their lives for the sake of what they believe to be the true Gospel ?

A. Alas ! there was a time when many hundreds of men and women sacrificed themselves for the love of a reformed system of Christianity, which they believed to be the original gospel religion. But the horrible cruelties practised upon them, disheartened all those who were disposed to throw off the yoke of the pope ; and now people disguise their religious opinions, in order to avoid the most dangerous persecution.

R. And you, Sir, of course, were obliged to disguise your own persuasion, in order not to lose your liberty and your life ?

A. Just so. I lived ten years in the most wretched and distressed state of mind. Nothing was wanting to my worldly happiness, but the liberty of declaring my opinions : but that is impossible for a Roman Catholic, who lives under the laws which the popes have induced most of the Roman Catholic princes to

establish in their kingdoms. I could not say, as a Roman Catholic may, under the government of Great Britain and Ireland, "I will no longer be a spiritual subject of the pope: I will worship God as my conscience directs me, and according to what I find in the Bible." No: had I said so, or even much less; had any words escaped me, in conversation, from which it might be suspected that I did not believe exactly what the pope commands, I should have been taken out of my bed in the middle of the night, and been carried to one of the prisons of the Inquisition. Often, indeed, very often have I passed a restless night under apprehension that, in consequence of saying such words, my house would be assailed in the middle of the night by the agents of the Inquisition, and I should be taken away, in the black carriage which they used for conveying prisoners to their dungeons. Happy are the people of these kingdoms, where every man in his house is his castle, and where, provided he has not committed some real crime, he may sleep under the protection of a merman to his door, as if he dwelt in a walled and moated fortress! No such feeling of safety could be enjoyed where the tyranny of Rome prevails. A Roman Catholic, *who is not protected by protestant laws, or by laws influenced by a powerful protestant interest, as in some parts of Germany and in France, is all over the world a slave, who cannot utter a word against the opinions of his church, but at his peril.* "The very walls have ears," is a common saying in my country. A man is indeed beset with spies; for the church of Rome has contrived to employ every one as such, against his nearest and dearest relations. Every year there is publicly read at church a proclamation, or (as they call it) a *bull* from the pope, commanding parents to accuse their children, children their parents, husbands their wives, and wives their husbands, of any words or actions against the Roman Catholic religion. People are told, that whoever disobeys this command, not

only incurs damnation for his own soul, but is the cause of the same to those whom he wishes to spare. So that many have had for their accusers their fathers and mothers, without knowing to whom they owed their sufferings under the Inquisitors; for the name of the informer is kept a most profound secret, and the accused is tried without ever seeing the witnesses against him.

R. I am perfectly astonished at the things you say, Sir; and did I not perceive by your manners that you are a gentleman, I should certainly suspect that you were trying to trepan us poor unlearned people.

A. I neither wonder, nor am offended at your suspicion. All I can say to remove it is, that I am well known in London; that for the truth of every thing you have already heard, and will hear from me, I am ready to be examined *upon oath*; and that there are many hundreds of Spaniards at this moment in England, who will attest every word of mine about the Inquisition of the pope in Spain. I say the Inquisition of the pope, because that horrible *court of justice* was established, kept up, and managed, by and under the pope's authority. And now I must add one word as to the effects of the pope's contrivance to make spies of the nearest relations. I have told you that my parents were good and kind. My mother was a lady whom all the poor of the neighbourhood loved for her goodness and charity; and indeed I often saw her denying herself even the common comforts of life, that she might have the more to give away. I was her favourite child, being the eldest; and it is impossible for a mother to love with more ardent affection than that she shewed to me. Well, as I could not entirely conceal my own mind in regard to religion, she began to suspect that I was not a true Roman Catholic in my heart. Now, she knew that the pope had made it her duty to turn informer even against her own child, in such cases; and dreading that the day might come, when some words should drop from

me against the Roman Catholic religion, which it would be her duty to carry to the judges, she used to avoid my company, and shut herself up, to weep for me. I could not, at first, make out why my dear mother shunned my company; and was cut to the heart by her apparent unkindness. I might to this day have believed that I had lost her affection, but that an intimate friend of her's put me in possession of the state of her mind.

R. Upon my word, Sir, you give me such horror of Roman Catholics, that I shall in future look with suspicion on some neighbours of mine of that persuasion.

A. God forbid that such should be the consequence of my communication with you. The Roman Catholic religion in itself, and such as the pope would make it all over the world, if there were no protestants to resist it, is the most horrible system of tyranny, that ever opposed the welfare of man. But most of the Roman Catholics in these kingdoms are free from many of the evils which their religion produces in other countries. They have grown up under the influence of a constitution, which owes the fulness of its freedom to protestantism; and many of them are protestants in feeling. Thanks to the Reformation, even the spiritual subjects of the pope and his church have learnt to respect themselves, and to set bounds to an authority which many of them acknowledge only for the purpose of preventing divisions among the lower classes. Could the pope obtain any real influence in the government of these kingdoms, I would not answer for the consequences. But a legal system of religious oppression cannot find any powerful supporters in these countries. Poor, ignorant individuals may still continue in blind subjection to priests. But the complete ignorance, without which mental slavery cannot exist, must soon disappear from these islands.

R. Heaven send that happy day! But, Sir, I want to know the rest of your own story, and how, though obliged to appear outwardly a Roman Catholic, you settled within yourself what you were to believe.

A. I will not delay to satisfy your curiosity, though that part of my story is the most painful to me. At all events, you will be sure, when you hear it, that I am telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, since I do not spare myself.—You must know then, that, from the moment I believed that the Roman Catholic religion was false, I had no religion at all, and lived without God in the world.

R. I am sorry to hear that, Sir. But surely you might have tried some other church before you became an infidel.

A. Ah, my honest and worthy friend, your expressions deserve my praise, though I feel humbled and rebuked by their truth. Yet you forget that I was in a country where the Roman Catholic religion played its accustomed game of *Christ with the pope, or no Christ*. The first thing that a strict Roman Catholic teaches those who grow under his care, is, that either all that the Church of Rome believes, is true, or Christianity must be a human invention. To believe that the Church of Rome can be, or is wrong in one single article of her creed, is, according to that church, the same as to disbelieve the whole gospel. That is the reason why, in the countries where the Roman Catholic religion is strictly professed, every one who rejects it in his heart, looks immediately upon Christianity as a fable.

R. Pardon me, Sir, I do not mean to offend you: but I should wish to know if you still continue of the same opinion, and believe with the infidels, whose books are sometimes secretly sold among country folks, that there is no truth in the Bible?

A. I am so far from being of that mind, that I do humbly and earnestly pray to God he will rather deprive me of every temporal comfort, and make my sufferings in this world equal to those of the most unhappy wretch that ever breathed, than withdraw from me his grace, whereby I believe in his Son Jesus Christ, and hope, through his merits, for eternal salvation.

R. I have not the heart to say *Amen* to the first part of your prayer, though I cordially join in the last. But will you have the goodness to inform me how it was that you came to believe again in the Bible, in spite of your former opinions? For I have often heard a neighbour of mine, who frequently boasts that he is an infidel, say, that the man whose eyes are once (as he calls it) open about the Bible, can never be made again to believe in it.

A. I wish I could relate my own history to that neighbour of yours. Perhaps, by God's mercy, he might himself use some of the means which Providence has employed in my own conversion. Of one thing I feel quite assured on this point, that if by God's grace, which always assists the honest inquirer after religious truth, your infidel neighbour would abstain from deliberate sin, and pray daily to his Maker (for I hope he has not gone so far as to deny the being of a God) to lead him into the truth, he would soon become a sincere Christian. But I will proceed with the account of myself. When I had in my own mind thrown off all allegiance to the Christian religion, though I tried to enjoy myself, and indulge my desires, I could find neither happiness nor comfort. My mind was naturally averse to deceit, and I could not brook the necessity of acting publicly as the minister of a religion which I believed to be false.—But what could I do? As for wealth and honours, heaven knows they did not weigh a straw against my love of manly openness and liberty. I once, indeed, went so far as to write to a friend who lived at Cadiz, and whom, after many years' absence, I have lately seen in London, to procure me a passage to North America, whither I wished to escape; trusting to my own labour for subsistence. But when I looked round, and saw my dear father and mother in the decline of life; when I considered that my flight would bring their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave, tears would gush into my eyes, and

the courage which I owed to anger melted at once into love for the authors of my being. Ten years of my life did I pass in this hot and cold fever, this ague of the heart, without a hope, without a drop of that cordial which cheers the very soul of those who sacrifice their desires to their duty, under the blessed influence of religion. At last it pleased God to afford me a means of escaping from the tyranny of the pope, and make me willingly and joyfully submit to the easy yoke of his blessed Son Jesus Christ. The ways of Providence for my change appear so wonderful to me, that I feel almost overcome when I earnestly think upon them. In the first place, it was certain that I could not leave Spain for a protestant country, without giving a death-blow to my parents. Could any human being have foreseen, in the year 1807, that in 1810, my own father and mother would approve my leaving Spain for England? And yet, so it came to pass. You have heard how Bonaparte entered Spain with the design of placing his brother Joseph upon the throne of that country; how for a time he seemed to have obtained his wishes, when his armies advanced till they came within view of Cadiz, and threatened to extinguish the last hope of the Spaniards. I was at that time at Seville, my native town. As the French troops approached it, all those who would not submit to their government, and had the means of removing to another place, tried to be beforehand with them, by taking their flight to Cadiz. My parents could not abandon their home; but as they abhorred the French troops, and hated the injustice of their invasion, they were anxious that I should quit the town. Here I saw the most favourable opening for executing my long delayed plan for escaping the religious tyranny under which I groaned. As the security of Cadiz was much doubted, my parents approved the intention of not stopping there, but sailing as soon as possible for England. They hoped I would return. But my resolution was taken, and I well knew that I should never see those

dear objects again. I knew it was for ever; and my heart bleeds at the recollection of the last view I took of my father and mother. A few weeks after, I found myself on these shores.

R. Indeed, Sir, I think you did right. Poor as I am, had I known your case when you arrived, I would have welcomed you to my cottage.

A. If I should tell you all the gratitude I feel for this country, and my sense of the kindness and friendship which I have met with from the moment I landed, you might suspect me of flattery. But how different appeared England to me from what I had imagined it to be!

R. What, Sir, did you fear that we should behave rudely to a foreigner who came for shelter among us?

A. No, indeed; that was not my mistake. I found England as hospitable and generous as it had always been described to me. But one thing I found in it which I never expected; that was true and sincere religion. I have told you that in Roman Catholic countries people are made to believe that whoever is not a Roman Catholic is only a Christian in name. I therefore supposed that in this England, though men appeared externally to have a religion, few or none would care any thing about it. Now observe the merciful dispensations of Providence with regard to me. Had I upon my first arrival fallen in with some of your infidels, I should have been confirmed in all my errors. But it pleased God so to direct events as to make me very soon acquainted with one of the most excellent and religious families in London. I had, in my former blindness and ignorance, believed that since in Spain, which is the most thoroughly Roman Catholic country in the world, the morals in general are very loose; a nation of Christians only in name, (for such was my mistaken opinion of you,) would be infinitely more addicted to vicious courses. But, when I began to look about me, and observed the modesty of the ladies, the quiet and orderly lives

of the greatest part of the gentry, and compared their decent conversation with the profane talk which is tolerated in my country, I perceived, at once, that my head was full of absurd notions, and prepared myself to root out from it whatever I should find to be wrong. In this state of mind I went one Sunday to church, out of mere curiosity; for my thoughts were at that time very far from God and his worship. The unmeaning ceremonies of the Roman Catholics had made me sick of churches and church service. But when, in the course of the prayers, I perceived the beautiful simplicity, and the warm-heartedness, if I may say so, of your prayer-book, my heart, which for ten years had appeared quite dead to all religious feelings, could not but show a disposition to revive, like the leafless trees when breathed upon by the first soft breezes of spring. God had prevented its becoming a dead trunk: it gave indeed no signs of life; but the sap was stirring up from the root. This was easily perceived in the effect which the singing of a hymn had upon me that morning. It begins—

“ When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.”

The sentiments expressed in this beautiful hymn penetrated my soul like the first rain which falls upon a thirsty land. My long impious disregard of God, the Father and supporter of my life and being, made me blush, and feel ashamed of myself; and a strong sense of the irrational ungratefulness in which I had so long lived forced tears from my eyes. I left the church a very different man from what I was when I entered it; but still very far from being a true believer in Christ. Yet, from that day I began to put up a very short prayer every morning, asking for light and protection from my Creator, and thanking him for his goodness. It happened about that time that some books concerning the truth of religion fell in my way.

I thought it fair to examine the matter again, though I imagined that no man could ever answer the arguments against it, which had become quite familiar to my mind. As I grew less and less prejudiced against the truth of divine revelation, I prayed more earnestly for assistance in the important examination in which I was engaged. I then began a careful perusal of the Scriptures, and it pleased God, at the end of two years, to remove my blindness, so far as to enable me with humble sincerity to receive the sacrament according to the manner of the Church of England, which appeared to me, in the course of my inquiries, to be, of all human establishments, the most suited, in her discipline, to promote the ends of the Gospel, and in her doctrines as pure and orthodox as those which were founded by the Apostles themselves. It is to me a matter of great comfort that I have now lived a much longer period in the acknowledgment of the truth of Christianity, than I spent in my former unbelief.

R. You have indeed great reason to thank God. But have you never had any doubts about our Church, since you became a member of it?

A. Never, my friend, as compared with the Roman Catholic. As to the Church of England, I am not acquainted with any Christian establishment to which I would give the preference over it. And as respects the Roman Catholic system, I never for a moment had a doubt, that, compared even with the most imperfect Protestant system, every unprejudiced man ought to reject it. My mind has never had the least doubt, in favour of the church I quitted. I will, however, confess to you, that a few years after I became a Protestant, I was strongly tempted in my faith; not, however, as I said before, from any leaning to Romanism, but from a doubt whether the doctrine of the people called *Unitarians*—I mean those who say that Christ was nothing but a man, the son of Joseph and Mary—might not be true. During the examination of this point, though I was not very long in finding that the

assertion that Christ was only a highly inspired man, is not scriptural, my old habits of unbelief were roused, and they harassed me severely. Clouds of doubt hovered, a long time, over my soul, and darkness increased now and then to such a degree, that I feared my Christian faith had been extinguished. Had I, in consequence of this disposition to unbelief, either ceased to pray, or returned, as is often the case, to a course of immorality, nothing, I believe, could have saved me. But the grace of God was secretly at work in me; and, whatever doubts I had about the doctrines of the gospel, I never deemed myself at liberty openly and wilfully to offend against its commandments. I sincerely wished to find the truth; and, distressed as I often was by the difficulties and obscurities which Christian men have raised, by their attempts to explain the mysteries of our redemption, yet my knowledge of the vanity and flimsiness of infidelity made me often turn to Christ, and say, (I can assure you I often uttered the words aloud in tears,) "To whom shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life¹." Partly from these doubts, and partly from a long and lingering illness which the change of climate had brought upon me, I passed the greater part of a year without receiving the sacrament. Had I, as far as it was my own fault, abstained much longer from that appointed means of grace, my spiritual danger would have increased; but, by God's mercy, I examined myself upon that point, and finding that my conscience did not charge me with any true impediment to the reception of the holy sacrament; and that, as to the doubts on my mind, they were involuntary, and accompanied with a sincere desire of finding the truth, I presented myself at the sacramental table, with feelings similar to those which I conceived I should have, if, as it was then probable, death had sent me, with my doubts, before the judgment-seat of Christ.

¹ John vi. 68.

I threw myself, in fact, wholly upon his mercy. My trust did not prove deceitful; for calm was soon restored to my soul; and I found myself stronger than ever in the faith and profession which I made when I became a member of the Church of England. You see, my friend, that I disguise not my weakness from the world. You may suppose, that, for a man who has spent his whole life in the pursuit of learning, it must be very mortifying to confess so many errors, so many doubts, in a word, to shew the utter feebleness of his mind and soul, when unsupported by Divine grace. But I conceive this to be a duty which I owe to the truth of the gospel, and to the spiritual welfare of my fellow-creatures. How happy should I be if the humblest individual, when tempted, should take courage from the knowledge of my case, and cling to prayer whilst he examined, like the Bereans, "whether these things were so!"

R. Sir, I pity what you have suffered; but I must say it comforts me to find that doubts and errors upon religious subjects are not confined to the unlearned.

A. They are not, indeed; on the contrary, the pride of human knowledge is often the rock on which the faith of the higher classes of society is wrecked. You must not suppose, however, that true knowledge of any kind is opposed to Christianity. But there is a pride of learning which indisposes the heart for that constant feeling of dependence on God, that incessant desire of Divine support against error and sin, without which we must not expect to succeed in any religious inquiry. There are unquestionable advantages in learning, when it is joined with a humble, a meek spirit. But the poorer classes of society, if it be not their own fault, are in no way farther removed from salvation, on account of their want of learning, than the more privileged of mankind. "To the poor was

the gospel preached," first of all, and through the poor and uneducated was the world converted to Christ; for, after all, both rich and poor, the learned and the unlearned, must equally, by humility and an intimate knowledge of their own sinfulness, approach the source of salvation in Christ. Happy indeed are those millions of humble Christians, who, from the publication of Christianity, have embraced, by a lively faith, the offer of pardon and salvation in which the *true gospel* consists, and proved by their conduct that their faith was *true*! How infinitely more happy has been the lot of these humble Christians, than mine! After spending my whole life in reading; after trying, by ten years incessant study, to obtain a complete assurance that Christianity was a fable, and finding out at last, by great attention and labour, that such books as engaged to prove this had deceived me; I have to thank God that by his grace, I find myself, as to Christian faith, upon a level with the humblest and most illiterate disciple of Christ, who trusts in his redeeming blood for salvation.—Yet the ways of God are wonderful; and it is not presumptuous to hope that the bitter struggles of my mind may be made the means of confirming the faith of many.

R. I feel assured they will. Without flattering you, Sir, or supposing that your talents or knowledge are above the common run of gentlemen of your class, it stands to reason, that the religion which, after being so many years an unbeliever, you have embraced so earnestly, must have a very strong evidence in support of its truth.

A. So strong, my friend, does that evidence appear to me, that I would say, whoever takes proper pains to examine it, if he really acknowledges that there is a living God, a Being who concerns himself in the moral conduct of mankind, will never be completely at rest, till he has believed in Christ. The greatest part of those who pretend to believe in a God, and yet reject the gospel where it is taught, without the vari-

ous kinds of human errors which disfigure its genuine doctrines, do not mean by the name of the Deity any thing like the Supreme Being, the living God, the intelligent Creator of mankind, revealed in the Scriptures; but some unknown cause of what we call nature, to which the good or bad conduct of men is equally indifferent. If it were not so, it would be difficult for them to suppose that a religion like the Christian, supported by proofs so superior to those of all the other religions in the world, so infinitely above them all in the purity of its moral views, and so effectual in allaying the storms of evil passions, and bestowing peace and happiness on the breast that fairly gives it room to act; it is impossible, I say, that a man who really believes in an all-seeing, and all-wise God, could at the same time believe that a religion of this kind is only one of the numerous impostures which have been, at different times, successfully practised on mankind; and that it is indifferent in the eyes of a holy and just God, whether men, who can make the comparison, receive or reject it. This consideration was, my dear friend, my sheet anchor, in the fierce tempest of doubt, which, for a time, threatened to sink my faith after my conversion to protestant Christianity. When nearly overcome by a multitude of minute infidel arguments (for they are all like a swarm of puny insects, and can never form a well-connected band, as the proofs of Christianity do), I turned, in the anguish of my soul, to seek for a resting-place upon the "Rock of ages," Christ the Saviour. The view around me was dismal indeed; a dark gulf, with small spots, every one of which I had tried, and found unable to support me, and from which the fall, I well knew, would inevitably plunge me into the bottomless abyss of *Atheism*. It was in this distress of mind that I exclaimed with the apostle Peter, *To whom shall I go?* and remained faithful to him whom I had chosen for my Lord and Master.

R. Your reasons appear to me very strong, and

such, that no man who feels a real concern for his soul, can shut his eyes to them. I clearly understand that a living God—a God to whom the man who murders, and he who feeds the hungry, the man who oppresses, and he that protects the orphan and the widow; the man who promotes virtue in his house and neighbourhood, and he who spreads vice and misery for the gratification of his brutal passions, are not equally acceptable, or indifferent; cannot be supposed to have allowed a religious cheat to appear so beautiful and desirable, as true Christianity shews itself to every honest and upright heart. But what have you, Sir, to say to the existence of so many false religions as there are in the world? Would God permit them to exist, to the spiritual ruin of millions of men, if these matters were of real consequence in his eyes?

A. Suppose yourself obliged to penetrate through a dark forest, full of wild beasts and precipices, and crossed by innumerable paths. On the side by which your entrance lies, there stands the son of the king of the country, who with the greatest kindness offers to a great multitude of the new comers a little map, with a clear view of the paths, which, he tells them, must lead to certain ruin; while others are distinctly marked, which if they carefully follow, he promises to meet them at the other side of the perilous wood, and make them rich and happy in his kingdom. You inform yourself, by every possible means, of the character of this man, and find no reason to doubt that he is able and willing to fulfil his engagements. Yet, upon observing great crowds of men and women, who are allowed to enter with little or no advice respecting their way, you rather pertly begin to question the prince about them. He will not, however, condescend to answer these questions, but urges you to avail yourself of his advice, and to consider how unjust and unfeeling it is, when he takes such pains for *your* safety, to question his justice and benevolence in his conduct towards his apparently less favoured subjects. Suppose,

lastly, that your pride and conceit get the better of your reason, and that you address the prince in such words as these: "Sir, though I have no reason to suspect your veracity, yet your conduct towards these people whom I see wandering without maps, about the forest, is not at all to my fancy. You must, therefore, either explain to me every plan and reason of your government, or I will throw away this map, and trust my own endeavours to find my way through the forest." Would you deserve compassion, if this proud rashness carried you to inevitable perdition?

R. Certainly not: God forbid I should ever act in such an ungrateful manner.

A. Yet this is exactly what men do, who object to the Gospel, that God has not made it equally known to all the nations of the world. They, in fact, cast away the "pearl of great price," because they have been chosen amongst millions to possess it. They see the real and substantial value of the gift: they cannot but believe that he who puts it into their hands must be infinitely kind and merciful; but still their pride makes them prefer total darkness to the partial light which is offered them; they think it too much to give glory to God for what they themselves receive, and trust that his goodness will, in some way, provide for his other creatures, and finally judge the world in righteousness.

R. I only proposed the question, because I have heard it from others. But, as to myself, I feel satisfied that every man's duty is to receive God's gifts with thankfulness, and without questioning the wisdom and justice of his government. I will, however, before we part, take the liberty to ask you why, when you became convinced of the truth of the Gospel, you did not return to your parents and friends in Spain? Surely there cannot be such difference between Romanism and Protestantism, as to force a man to become a stranger for ever to his own flesh and blood, and (as I believe you have done) turn his back upon

all hopes and prospects of life, and trust to chance for his subsistence. But perhaps, Sir, you have availed yourself of the liberty to marry, which clergymen have in this country, and cannot leave your wife and children.

A. You are mistaken, my friend, in your conjecture. I lost my health soon after my arrival in this country, and have never possessed the means of supporting a wife, in such comfort as might make her amends for devoting her life to the care of a sickly husband. But I do not like to speak upon these subjects, more than is absolutely necessary to remove all suspicion as to the motives of my change. My voluntary exile has been attended to me with every thing that can make me thankful, yet without any circumstance that could bribe my will against my sincerity. As to the principal part of your question, I can assure you that the difference which I find between Christianity as it is represented by the church of Rome, and as a person free from the authority of that church, (that is, *a protestant*,) may find it in the New Testament, is so great and important, that, had there been no protestantism in the world, I cannot conceive how I should be a Christian at this moment.

R. Do you believe then, Sir, that the Roman Catholics are not Christians?

A. I have known most sincere followers of Christ amongst them; but am perfectly convinced that Roman Catholicism, BY ADDING OTHER FOUNDATIONS to the only one *which is laid*, that is, *Jesus Christ*¹; by making the Pope, with his church, if not the *author*, certainly the *finisher* of their faith—the object on which their minds habitually and ultimately rest, exposes the members of that communion to the most imminent danger from the arguments of infidelity. What happened to me in my youth is the lot of a great part of the clergy and the higher classes of Spain.

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 11.

The lower classes, and those who among the higher read little, and for that little confine themselves to the books approved by their church, are fierce bigots, who would, if they had it in their power, spread desolation and havoc among the nations who do not bend the knee before the saints and relics of Rome. But, amongst such as read and think for themselves, I seldom found a sincere Christian. By the intolerance which Romanism exercises, wherever it is the religion of the country, multitudes are forced to be hypocrites; but they are generally so uneasy and restless under the restraint imposed on them by the threats of the law, that a very slight acquaintance with another unbeliever will be sufficient to open their hearts to each other, and make them attack, in private, with great violence or levity, the most sacred mysteries of religion. There are few practical observations of my own, which I look upon with more confidence, than the direct tendency of the Roman Catholic religion to produce infidelity. I suppose you either recollect, or have heard, the almost universal contempt in which the Christian religion was held in France about the time of the Revolution. Now, had the French people been sincere Christians, as they appeared, just before their revolution broke out, they could not possibly have been changed in a few months into such horrible infidels, as that there should have been a doubt in their sort of parliament, whether they were or not to pass a law against the belief in a God. Here, therefore, you may observe the common effects of Romanism, where it is forced upon a whole nation by law. It first disfigures and distorts the Gospel, so as to make it appear absurd and ridiculous in the eyes of men that are bold enough to use their judgments. Then it stops their mouths, and makes their thoughts rankle in their hearts, till, at last, when some great commotion releases them from the fear of religious tyranny, they abhor the very name of religion, under which they have been forced to bow to the most bare-

posed impostures and vexations; and shake off, in desperate impiety, their allegiance to God; taking it to be one and the same thing with the yoke so long and heavily laid on their necks by the pope and his supporters.

R. You think then, Sir, that a Protestant is safer from the attacks of infidelity than a Roman Catholic?

A. Incomparably safer. In matters of religion, I do not much like illustrations or comparisons taken from subjects which may lead the mind to levity. But I cannot help comparing the question between a Romanist and an infidel to one of the bets which you call *neck or nothing*. As a Roman Catholic is bound to believe that the scriptures would be useless without the infallibility of the pope and his Church, he must be ready to cast away the whole Bible, as soon as he shall be obliged to confess that there is the least error in the creed of his church. The Romanist grounds his belief of the Bible on his belief in the Church of Rome; the Protestant, on the contrary, grounds his respect for the Church to which he belongs, on his belief of the Bible. The whole building of religion has been placed upside down by the Romanist, and the original foundations been made to stand upon the spires and pinnacles of the superstructure. Knock one of these down, and the whole tumbles to the ground. It is not so with the Protestant. He also has a Church; but if it be a truly Protestant Church, she will leave him free to try her authority by her conformity with the scriptures. She will not, like Rome, teach her children that nothing can be true Christianity but what is professed under her control, and that Christ will not acknowledge as his disciples such as learn his doctrines through any other channel. A true Protestant Church, rather than endanger the saving faith of her members, by rivetting upon their minds the notion of no alternative between the absolute rejection of Christ, and perfect submission to her own declaration, will sacrifice every view of advantage to herself, and even

afford matter of exultation to her opponents, by leaving her members in perfect freedom to desert her, and choose their own Christian guides. "Thanks be to God! (exclaims a pious and amiable bishop¹ of the Church of England and Ireland, in one of the most eloquent passages to be read in any language,) thanks be to God, this mark of our Saviour is in us. As Solomon found the true mother by her natural affection, that chose rather to yield to her adversary's plea, claiming her child², than endure that it should be cut in pieces; so may it soon be found, at this day, whether is the true mother: our's that saith, Give her the living child, and kill him not; or your's, (the Church of Rome) that if she may not have it, is content it may be killed, rather than want of her will. 'Alas! (saith our's, even of those that leave her,) these be my children! I have borne them to Christ in baptism: I have nourished them as I could with my own breasts, his Testaments. I would have brought them up to man's estate, as their free birth and parentage deserves. Whether it be their lightness, or discontent, or her enticing words and gay shows, they leave me; they have found a better mother. Let them live yet, though in bondage. I shall have patience; I permit the care of them to their Father. I beseech him to keep them, that they do no evil. If they make their peace with him, I am satisfied; they have not hurt me at all.' Nay, but saith your's, (the Church of Rome,) 'I sit alone as Queen and mistress of Christ's family; he that hath

¹ Bishop Bedell. He was promoted in 1624 to the see of Kilmore, in Ireland. The spirit of retaliation, which the previous persecutions of Rome still kept alive, found the greatest opponent in Bishop Bedell. His meekness and universal charity had so gained him the hearts of the Irish Roman Catholics, that in the rebellion of 1641, the Bishop's palace was the only dwelling in the county of Cavan which the fury of the rebels respected. The passage above quoted is from a letter to a person who had turned papist. I have copied it from *THE IRISH*, a work of Mr. S. T. Coleridge, which is much less known than its eloquence, piety, and learning, deserve.

² Read the third chapter of the first book of Kings.

³ The splendid Church-service of Rome.

not me for his mother cannot have God for his Father. Mine therefore are these, either born or adopted; and if they will not be mine, they shall be none.' So, without expecting Christ's sentence, she cuts with the temporal sword, hangs, burns, draws, those that she perceives inclined to leave her, or have left her already. So she kills with the spiritual sword those that submit not to her; yea, thousands of souls, that not only have no means so to do, but many which never so much as have heard whether there be a pope of Rome or no. Let our Solomon be judge between them—yea, judge you—more seriously and maturely, not by guesses, but by the very mark of Christ, which wanting yourselves, you have unawares discovered in us; judge, I say, without passion and partiality, according to Christ's word, which is his flock, which is his Church."—(Oh, my friend, if the deluded Protestants, who allow themselves to be allured to Romanism, knew, as I do, by a long and sad experience, the proud, fierce, and tyrannous spirit of the Church to which they submit, by their recognition of the Pope and his laws, they would weep, with more bitter tears than Esau, the loss of that Christian liberty, which is the birth-right of every one who is born a Protestant. A true Roman Catholic is the spiritual slave of the slaves of the Pope, the priesthood, all over the world. If you hear them talk loud and boldly in these kingdoms; if they appear to you as free and independent as other men, they owe it to the Protestant laws, which protect them against the Church tyranny to which their religion binds them. They owe it also to the politic system pursued by the Pope himself, who, by allowing to them, in silence, this apparent freedom, acts like the huntsmen in India, who let their tame elephants roam at large in the forests, that they may entice the yet untamed and free into the pitfalls. Would you form a correct idea of the character and spirit of that Church which the Roman Catholics bind themselves to obey, as they hope for salvation; of that

Church, to be free from whose grasp, I deem my losses clear gain, and my exile a glorious new birth to the full privileges of a man and a Christian—grant me another patient hearing, at your own convenience, and you shall see the Pope's Church, such as she is, and without the disguises which she sometimes uses in order to enlarge her power.

R. I will hear you again, whenever you are disposed to speak on so important a subject.

DIALOGUE II.

Origin and Principles of Protestantism; Calumnies of the Romanists against Luther, Origin and Progress of the Spiritual Tyranny of the Pope; Existence of true Protestants long before Luther, Persecution of the Vaudois and Albigenses, Right Notion about the Church of which we speak in the Creed.

Reader. I CANNOT tell you, Sir, how anxious I have been for your return.

Author. It cannot be more, my good friend, than I myself have been to come to you. But as I know that I must be either a welcome or an unpleasant visitor, according as people dwell upon or reject the words of my first conversation; I feel some misgivings within me when I approach them the second time. Now, I can tell you with a certainty, which I do not derive from any confidence in myself, but from my experience of the nature of truth, that, since you have given some thought to the subject of our first conversation, you will, by God's blessing, bear with me to the end of our conferences.

R. That I will, Sir; for I love truth in all matters; and much more so, of course, in those which concern my salvation. Now, I must tell you, my head has been at work upon things that I had never thought of before. When I formerly met my Roman Catholic neighbours, or saw their chapel, these things appeared

to me as natural as the large yew-tree in our church-yard, or the holly-hedge before the rector's house. There they are; and I never troubled myself to know how they came there. But I now say to myself, I am a Protestant; and farmer such a one is a Roman Catholic. The reason of this I know to be, that my father, and my father's father, and so on, were Protestants, and his were Catholics. But was this always so? How did this great division begin among Christians? I have, of course, heard of the *Reformation*, and of Luther, who, according to a little penny book, which is frequently hawked among the country folks, seems not to have been a good man; for, it is said, he himself declares that the devil taught him what he was to write against the Roman Catholics. I can hardly believe this to be true: I wish, Sir, you would set me right about the Protestant religion, and who it is that we Protestants follow: Is it Luther?

A. I must beg you to stop and consider the true meaning of the expression—*protestant religion*. People talk of the *protestant religion* as if it were a complete creed containing every thing that Protestants believe. But you well know that there is no such general agreement of doctrine among Protestants. Now, from want of attention to this fact, many Protestants are perplexed and entangled, when the Romanists object to them a want of *unity* of doctrine. Observe, however, that Protestantism is not a *particular religion*. Protestantism consists in the rejection of the authority which the pope and his Church claim over all Christians, in matters of faith. On *this* point all Protestants are agreed—whoever rejects that authority, and still continues a follower of Christ's doctrine, as, to the best of his knowledge, he finds it in the scriptures, is a Protestant. The Roman Catholics would fain persuade the world that Luther is the author of our religion; but it is to be hoped that their partiality deceives them, and that they do not use a deliberate untruth out of pure spite. Such as are really learned

among them, cannot but know that Protestants acknowledge no master, on religious points, but Christ, whose instructions they seek in the inspired writings of his apostles and evangelists, contained in the New Testament. It is, however, a great shame that some learned men among the Roman Catholics should employ themselves in writing and sending about such trash as *the confessed intimacy of Luther with Satan*, when they must know, in the first place, that the story is a downright misrepresentation; and that, if Luther had really been the worst of men, (which is the very reverse of the truth), it would be the same with regard to us Protestants, as if a thief had, by some strange chance, put an honest individual in the way of recovering a great fortune, which a cunning set of men had converted to their own profit. I wish you, my friend, to remember the comparison I have just given you, whenever the Roman Catholics, or those writers of no religion, whom they employ to seduce the unlearned, come to you with stories about the wickedness of the Reformers, and the vices of Henry the Eighth. Surely it is nothing to us by what instruments and what means God was pleased to deliver us from the impostures and tyranny of the Church of Rome,—of that Church, which, having seized our rightful inheritance, the Bible, doled it out in bits and scraps to the people, mixed up and adulterated with human inventions. It is for them to be ashamed of the men they reckon among their popes; poisoners, adulterers, and much worse still; a fact which they will not venture to deny. It is for them, I say, to be ashamed, that they believe and declare that such men held the place and authority of Christ upon earth; and that all Roman Catholics are bound still to believe their declarations, as if they had been given by Christ himself and his apostles. We Protestants do not receive revealed truth through such channels. We feel grateful, indeed, to the Protestant Reformers, all of whom at the risk, and many by the loss of their lives,

roused the attention of the Christian world to the monstrous abuses which the popes had introduced into the Church. Our Reformers encouraged the world to shake off the iron yoke, which, in the name of Christ, the popes had laid upon it; but did not claim any authority over the Protestant Churches, similar to that which Rome had usurped. The great and essential difference between the Romanists and ourselves is this: the Roman Church says to all Christians "Follow me, in the first place, and through me, the scripture:" a truly Protestant Church, on the contrary, will say, "Follow me as long as I follow the Bible. I am ready to assist you with my instruction; I will teach you that, which, by the joint learning, labour, and traditional instruction of former Christians, I profess as the true doctrine preached by Christ and his Apostles; but, after all, each of you must finally judge whether he is to agree with me, or seek other instructors." This is the true *protestant principle*. The true Protestant acknowledges no *infallible authority* between himself and the scripture; the Roman Catholic does.

R. But is there any foundation for the story which the Roman Catholics are so busy to spread among the poor people, that Luther used to converse with the Devil?

A. No other foundation, my friend, than the spite which has rankled in the hearts of many among the Roman Catholic clergy, since Martin Luther opened the eyes of men to the spiritual tyranny of their church. Luther was called by the Romanists, an instrument of the devil, and all his words were said to be put into his mouth by the Prince of Darkness. In this manner they tried to frighten the simple and ignorant, that they might stop their ears to the powerful arguments of the great Reformer. Well, then, said Luther, addressing himself to his calumniators, let the doctors of the Roman Catholic church see if they can ~~truth~~ the reasons by which the devil proved to me ~~truth~~ mass is an idolatrous and unscriptural man-

ner of worship : and he overwhelms the said doctors with unanswerable reasons drawn from the holy scriptures. What better method could he employ to refute them, than the showing that what the Romanists attributed to the devil, was the true and genuine declaration of the word of God ? I have carefully examined the works of Luther upon this point, and can assure you, that what the Roman Catholics circulate in their penny tracts is a most ungrounded calumny. It is true that, according to a style of writing more in fashion at that time than in ours, Luther describes the supposed conversation with the devil. But he does this just as people write an instructive fairy tale. They make their picture as lively as possible, well knowing that no reader will be absurd enough to take it for a real fact. They hope, on the contrary, that the moral or instruction which the story contains will be easily separated from the fable, and that, by the assistance of the curiosity which the fable keeps up, the reasoning will be more deeply impressed on the mind. In retaliation for the silly story about the devil and Luther, we might indeed write a history of many popes of Rome, which would prove, not that they were in communication with, but actually possessed by Satan. I will, however, mention to you one of them, a Spaniard by birth, whom the Roman Catholics acknowledge as the head of their church, and whom they declare to have been the representative of Christ upon earth. The pope I speak of, whose name was Alexander VI., had four sons by a concubine, with whom he lived many years. The crimes he committed in order to enrich his children, exceed those of the most wicked heathen emperors. After a life of the most diabolical profligacy, he died by poison, which he took by mistake, having prepared it for some person who stood in the way of his son's advancement. This happened only twelve years before Luther's appeal to the scriptures against a church which recognised the spiritual authority of men like

pope Alexander, and called them the vicars of Christ upon earth. From this fact alone you may judge on which side the devil was most likely to be.

R. But, Sir, have the Roman Catholics really had such monsters for their popes?

A. They have, indeed, and not a few.

R. And do they bind themselves to acknowledge the spiritual authority of such men?

A. I will explain to you the whole church-system of the Romanists in a few words. The pope is their spiritual king; and what they call their church, that is, their bishops all over the world, is, one may say, their spiritual parliament. Now, as this parliament of bishops from all parts of the world cannot meet without great difficulty, and as no one but the pope can call it together, it is the pope alone, who, in reality, holds supreme authority over his spiritual subjects, the Roman Catholics. The way in which the pope governs his churches all over the world is this: he publishes a kind of proclamation, which they call a bull, and sends it round to all places where there are Roman Catholics. As every bishop, by himself, is a subject of the pope, who calls himself the *bishop of bishops*, the bull must be obeyed by them. Every bishop commands all his priests to see that the orders of the pope be obeyed by all those who are under their charge. The priests preach the necessity of complying with the orders of the pope; and when people come to get absolution of their sins, by privately confessing them, they are told that they cannot be forgiven, unless they obey the bull from Rome. So, you see, that if all the world were true Roman Catholics, the pope would do what he pleased everywhere. Such, in fact, was the case for many centuries before the Reformation. The popes, in those times, boldly declared that they had authority from God to depose kings from their thrones; and many a fierce war has raged in consequence of the ambition of the popes, who wished all Christian kings to recognise their au-

thority. King John of England was obliged by the pope to lay his crown at the feet of a priest who was sent to represent him. That king was moreover made to sign a public deed, by which he surrendered the kingdoms of England and Ireland to the pope, reserving to himself the government of these realms under the control of the bishops of Rome; and finally, as a mark of subjection, bound himself to pay an annual tribute. The priest who represented the pope took away the crown, and kept it five days from the king, to show that it was in the pope's power to give it back or not, as he pleased.

R. But did not you say, Sir, that the pope only claims authority in spiritual matters, that is, in things that concern the soul?

A. Yes; but as the soul is in the body, the pope has often begun his spiritual government by things which are corporal and temporal. The pope used to argue in this manner: "I am the vicar and representative of Christ upon earth, and the souls of all men are in my charge. There is a king in such a kingdom, (say England) who will not believe the doctrines which I teach. He naturally will spread his own religious views in that country; and consequently it is my *spiritual* duty to take the crown off his head. His subjects (supposing them true and staunch Roman Catholics) are obliged, as they wish to save their souls, to obey my spiritual commands. I will, therefore, send a bull, or proclamation, desiring them not to acknowledge for their king, a man, who, how well soever he may govern their temporal interests, is sure to ruin their spiritual concerns, and lead them all to eternal perdition."

R. But is it a doctrine of the pope, that all men who are not of his opinion must be lost to eternity?

A. It is, indeed. It is an express article of their creed, which it is not in their power to deny without being accursed by their own church, and ceasing to be Roman Catholics.

R. I cannot comprehend how Christians all over the world came to believe that men could not be saved, unless they pinned their faith on the pope and his church. I believe, Sir, no one doubted that point before the Reformation.

A. So the Roman Catholics give it out; but it is not so in fact. You must know that there exists a very ancient and numerous church, which is called the *Greek*, which never acknowledged the pope as the head of the universal church. There are also the churches of the Armenians and Ethiopians, which were established by the apostles, or their early successors, and have no idea of the necessity of submission to the pope, in order to be true Christians. Christianity, indeed, had been long established before the popes bethought themselves of claiming spiritual dominion over all Christendom. But I will tell you how they accomplished their usurpation, and you will see that the progress of their tyranny was perfectly natural. If you read the Acts of the Apostles, where we have the inspired history of the first Christian churches, you will find no mention of any authority like that which Rome claims for herself and her head, the pope. Rome, however, was then, and had been for a long time, the mistress of the world. It was now the imperial city, where the supreme authority resided which the most civilized nations obeyed. At first, the Roman emperors made the fiercest opposition to Christianity; and the Christian bishops of Rome being persecuted and in danger of their lives, had neither spirit nor leisure to imagine themselves superior to all other bishops. But the persecutions ceased; and the emperors themselves becoming Christians, the bishops of Rome began to think themselves entitled to be that in the church of Christ, all over the world, which the emperors were in the whole Roman state. It was then that it began to be given out as an unquestionable point, that St. Peter was the head of the apostles, though it never appears in the New

Testament that he claimed or exercised authority over them ; that, in like manner, the pope was the head of all bishops ; and that as Christ said to St. Peter, that he was a rock, on which he would build his church, every pope, good, bad, or indifferent, must also be a rock, on which the whole of Christianity should stand. The temporal power of Rome gave a certain colour to these absurd fancies ; for Rome was at that time, to the greatest and best part of the world, what London is now to England and all her possessions. People, you know, attach ideas of superiority to every thing that comes from the capital of a great empire. It happened, however, that about the time when the popes began to think of these imaginary rights of the Roman See, the western part of the Roman empire was conquered by armies of barbarous people. Many of them were idolaters : partly by conviction, and partly by policy, they became Christians not long after. Indeed the Christian religion, though disfigured with errors, is so holy, and has such power over the soul, that the barbarian conquerors of Europe could not but respect it. The priests, who worked in their conversion, were in the pope's interest, and took care to instruct those ignorant men in all the false pretences on which the bishops of Rome had built their assumed superiority. Every thing that the Roman priests said was received as gospel : for our forefathers (you should know that we are all chiefly descended from those northern warriors) could neither write nor read, and were generally more illiterate than the merest clown in our own times. Thus things proceeded for ages ; whilst error grew more and more rooted, as it descended from father to son. There were now and then a few men, who, notwithstanding the general ignorance, applied themselves to the study of the Scriptures, and some were bold enough to declare that the popes were usurpers over Christian liberty. But the pretended successors of St. Peter were not so mild as that holy apostle, who submitted

to rebukes.¹ They had grown into proud tyrants, who commanded all Christian princes to put to death every one that dared to contradict papal authority. Many massacres were committed by order of the popes, and even good men were ready to dip their hands in the blood of those whom Rome had declared heretics. The spiritual usurpers had a great advantage in those times, when the art of printing was unknown. Perhaps you are not aware, my friend, that it is not yet four centuries since the only way that people had to publish books was to get them copied out by hand; so that one hundred Bibles cost the labour of seven thousand days, or nearly twenty years, the value of which it was necessary to pay to the men who lived by writing out books. Consider, then, the ignorance of the Scriptures in which the mass of the people must have lived, when none but very wealthy men could afford to purchase a Bible. The Romanists boast to the ignorant and unlettered, that the religion of Rome had been acknowledged as the only true one over all the world; and that it was uncontradicted till the time of Luther. In this they tell you what is not a fact: but observe, besides, that the silence of the Christian people, till that period, is a poor sort of approbation, for it is the approbation of gross ignorance. In proportion as knowledge increased, so complaints and protestations against Rome became more frequent. But in every case they were answered by fire and sword. The popish clergy used, besides, another shameful trick. Whenever there arose a set of men who opposed their usurpations, they published the most infamous calumnies against their opponents, and charged them with the grossest crimes of the most filthy and disgusting lust. This they did in the same manner, and on the same ground, that the old pagans had done against the primitive Christians. For as both the early Christians, and the opposers of the tyranny of

¹ See St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, chap. ii.

Rome, were obliged to avoid death by holding their religious assemblies in secret, their enemies made the world believe that they did shut themselves up for vicious and infamous purposes. This trick was the more hateful, as the clergy of the church of Rome, at that very time, were, in general, the most dissolute and profligate set that ever lived; and this I can prove by the confession of their own writers. But Providence would not allow this state of things to continue much longer; and, as learning increased, so the opposition to Rome grew stronger. From the beginning of the twelfth century, the numbers which, in various and distant parts of Christendom, stood up against the errors and tyranny of the popes, were every day upon the increase, and that in spite of the most fierce persecution on the part of the Romanists. The very means which were employed against them, however, contributed, under God's providence, to prepare the great defeat of the papal see, which took place four hundred years afterwards, by the preaching of Luther. As those who opposed the corruptions of popery were put to death, or spoiled of their property, and turned adrift upon the world, many of them took refuge in distant countries, such as Bulgaria, Hungary, and Bohemia, from whence their descendants, who had learnt to hate the oppression of the popes, returned in after times, and swelled the number of their opponents. There were also some clans or families of simple shepherds, who, like the Highlanders of Scotland, had lived all along confined to the valleys of the mountains which separate France from Italy. They were so poor and unknown, that the popes had either been ignorant of their existence, or thought it not worth the trouble to teach them their adulterated Christianity; so that these happy rustics preserved, by means of their poverty and simplicity, the doctrines of Christ such as they had received them from the early Christian missionaries, who spread the gospel before the popes had disfigured it with their inventions. Their

descendants live to this very day in the same spot, and are Protestants, notwithstanding the murders and burnings by which their sovereigns, the kings of Sardinia, strove, till very lately, to make them Romanists. An English clergyman, whom I have the pleasure of knowing, visited these good people not long ago, and found them most excellent Protestants. They have their bishops, priests, and deacons, and agree with us of the Church of England in every essential point of religious belief and practice. These simple and truly primitive Christians are known by the name of *Vauds*.—Well, to return to my narrative: the persecuted opponents of the pope, who returned from the land of their exile, having joined with those who remained concealed in Europe, reappeared in growing numbers, and were called Albigenses. Pope Innocent III., in the year 1198, despatched several priests with orders to procure their destruction wherever they might be found. One of those who made most havoc among them is known and worshipped by the Roman Catholics, by the name of St. Dominic. He was one of the very first, if not the first, (for this is a question of words, and nothing else,) appointed heads of the Inquisition, a court of judges, whose only employment is to discover and punish those who reject the authority of the church of Rome. A large province of France had become, almost to a man, staunch opposers of popery. But the pope promised remission of all their sins to the king of France and his lords, if they would join to destroy his enemies. The horrors which the friends of the pope committed in that war exceed all imagination. You may judge by what happened on the taking of a town called *Beziers*. The Albigenses had shut up themselves in it, though there were also many Roman Catholics within its walls. The pope's troops were on the point of storming it, when the doubt occurred to the soldiers, how they were to distinguish the Romans from the Albigenses, in order to spare the

first, without letting the pope's enemies escape. A priest, whom they consulted, answered them in these words: *Kill them all! God will know his own.* Upon hearing this, the soldiers entered the city, and put to the sword fifteen thousand persons. The same persecution, though not so fierce, was extended to Spain, and even to England, where thirty Albigenes were starved to death at Oxford.

R. I beg your pardon, Sir, for interrupting you: but I am longing to know whether you believe that those unfortunate creatures were real Protestants like ourselves.

A. They were certainly Protestants as far as opposition to the pope's tyranny and usurpation over the church of Christ is concerned, though I cannot answer for every point of doctrine which they held. But consider, my friend, the circumstances of those unhappy Christians. Their fathers had grown up under the dominion of the popes, in an age of universal ignorance. The Bible had been carefully kept from them, and it was with great difficulty and danger that they could meet to read some portions of it which had been translated into their language. How, then, could these poor people find out at once the truth, and avoid all sorts of errors, without competent and well educated teachers, and left, as they were, to grope for the true Gospel, not only in the dark, but under all the irritation and fear which a violent persecution must always produce? You see that it was impossible. This was only the outbreking of a beam of light, which gradually increased till the appointed time when Luther and the great Reformers of England were enabled to make a separation of the truths contained in the Bible, from the errors in which the church of Rome had involved them. My object in mentioning these facts is to show you, that in proportion as learning and an acquaintance with the Bible increased, the opposition to the pope's encroachments grew; and that the papal church was not with-

out public opponents, except when ignorance had overrun the world, and the Bible was almost unknown. The present pope is so well aware of this, that he has published a bull against the English and Foreign Bible Society, because, wherever the Bible makes its appearance without his own notes and interpretations, it never fails to raise him enemies. Can that be the *only true church* of God, whose greatest enemy is the pure word of God himself?

R. Surely not, Sir. But was there no true church of God from the time that popery began, till the *Reformation*? I recollect to have seen a Roman Catholic tract, where it was very strongly urged, that since Christ has promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against his church, the Roman Catholic church must all along have been in the right.

A. That is a very common argument of the Romanists: but it has no foundation except their own fancies about the infallibility of the church. Our Saviour did not promise that any particular church should never err; but that the light of his Gospel should never be completely put out by the contrivances and attacks of hell. Such is the meaning, you well know, of the words *to prevail*, or gain a victory. The light of revelation was very much dimmed and obscured, before Luther and the Reformers who established our church. Others had, long before them, complained of the obscurity, and tried, as well as they could, to remove it; but the means of Providence were not yet ready. Learning was very scarce till the invention of printing multiplied all sorts of books, and put the Bible into the hands of many. The printing-press had been spreading knowledge far and wide, for about seventy years, when Luther raised his voice, and the light of the Gospel shone again in its full splendour. The candle was the same that Christ had set on the candlestick: the pope had hid it under a bushel; but Luther, despising the threats of the spiritual tyrant, took it out of his keeping. Whoever

attentively considers the state of the Gospel before the Reformation, must be convinced that Luther was one of the most effectual instruments by which Christ prevented the victory of Satan over his church.

R. I am always at a loss when I would clearly understand what is meant by the church. Where is that church against which Christ tells us that Satan shall not prevail?

A. Let me answer you by a question, though I fear it will appear to you rather out of the way. Where is the plough that we pray God to speed?

R. Oh, Sir; we do not mean any particular plough. We only pray God to prosper and bless the labours of man to produce the staff of life.

A. Very well. Now, suppose that God had in the Scriptures promised that evil should never prevail against the *plough*; what would you understand by such words?

R. I believe they would mean that there should never be a famine over all the world, or that all the crops should never fail at once, so that it would be impossible to grow any more grain.

A. And what would you think if a club of farmers, with a rich man at their head, had established themselves in London, and wished to have a monopoly of all the corn on earth, saying to the government, "you must go to war to defend our rights; for God has said, that evil shall not prevail against the *plough*; and who can be *the plough*, but the head and company of farmers, of the county of Middlesex, wherein stands the great city of London, which is the first city of the world?"

R. I should certainly say that they were a set either of madmen or rogues, who wished to levy a tax upon all farmers, wherever they were.

A. I will now leave you to apply what we have said, to the use which the pope and his cardinals have made of Christ's promise, that Satan should not prevail against his Church. Church, in this passage, must be

understood in the sense in which we understand *plough*, speaking of agriculture in general. It must mean *Christianity* in general; not Christianity confined to the walls of any town. The meaning, therefore, of Christ's promise must be, that the devil shall never succeed in abolishing the faith in God through Christ, which has been published in the Gospel; not that the pope must always be in the right,—and much less that he is to be the spiritual lord of all the Christians on earth.

R. I can understand very well, that the promise of Christ cannot be confined to the church of Rome. But yet, Sir, is not the Church of Rome the *Catholic* Church; and do we not say in the Creed, that we believe in the Holy Catholic Church? One might suppose that, by these words we bind ourselves to believe in the Church of Rome.

A. I can hardly understand how an honest Roman Catholic, unless he is very ignorant, can use such an argument. The original signification of the word *catholic* is *universal*; meaning, probably, spread over all the world. But this cannot be literally applied to any denomination of Christians. In what particular sense it was used by the writer of that part of the creed in which the word *Catholic* is found, is of no great consequence to us; for you should know that the creed commonly called the *apostles'*, was not composed by them. The former part of it, down to "I believe in the Holy Ghost," is more ancient than the conclusion. The whole of that creed may be truly said to contain the doctrines taught by the apostles; but it is not their own composition. In regard, however, to the article on the Church, this must be clear to every one who considers the words of the creed—that the Church whose *being* or existence we profess to believe, is not any set of men who choose to call themselves the *Catholic Church*, but a Church that is *HOLY*; or (as it is explained immediately after) a Church that is the communion, or company of saints,—persons sanc-

tified by the Spirit of Christ, so as to be living members of his spiritual body. This society, this *holy Church*, is catholic, because it comprehends people of all nations, ranks, and conditions. But who the members of this *holy Catholic Church* are, is known only to HIM who sees into the heart. No *visible Church* can be properly called *holy*. Our Saviour himself has compared the whole of his kingdom on earth to "a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world¹." I have given you, my friend, the explanation which appears to me the clearest and most scriptural, as well as the best fitted for persons who, from want of learning, cannot well perceive the groundlessness, not to say childishness, of the argument taken from the word *Catholic*.

R. I remember, Sir, that in the other creed, the same article is expressed in the words, *I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church*. What is the meaning of that?

A. It shows the difficulty which the most numerous or most powerful party of Christians have found at all times, to express the visible marks of that *one true Church* which they wish to establish to the exclusion of all others. First they called their own party *Catholic* or universal; then, observing that it was difficult to reckon heads, and that the existence of a great number of dissenters clearly contradicted the claim of universality, they added the word *apostolic*. But every Church or party of Christians contends equally for that title; and consequently the difficulty remains where it was. The fact is, that as God has not been pleased to appoint any external marks by which to show his preference of one Church above another, men labour in vain about it. The idea of *one visible true*

¹ Matt. xiii. 47, 48.

Church, is groundless. If any clear marks of *one true Church* had been appointed, the apostles would have mentioned them in such a manner as would remove all doubt. Observe, however, that Paul and John, who frequently speak of false teachers, who lived in their own times, and gave them much trouble, never tell the Christians to go to Peter, or to any particular set of men, as the judges appointed by God over religious questions. If Paul had been aware that there was *one true Church*, commissioned by Christ to settle these questions, he could not do otherwise than tell the world plainly how this Church was to be known. But Paul does no such thing. When he complains, for instance, of Hymeneus and Philetus, "who had erred concerning the truth," and overthrew the faith of some, he refers the whole matter to God. "Nevertheless," (he says) "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." In regard, however, to external marks, he only adds, "let every one that nameth the name of Christ (that is, who calls himself a Christian,) depart from iniquity¹."

R. It appears to me, from what you say, that every man is left to judge for himself, in regard to the Church to which he is to belong.

A. Certainly.

R. And how is a poor unlearned man to judge?

A. He must judge as well as he can; employing, however, humble prayer, and proper diligence. He must, in the first place, embrace, with heart and soul, what is perfectly clear in the books of the New Testament. He must abstain from sinful courses, and endeavour by the study of the Scripture, and a constant desire of pleasing God, to increase in his heart the love of the Saviour. But when he has done all this, the inquiring Christian must finally settle in the church or congregation where he is convinced he has found the truth of the Gospel.

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19.

R. So you would not blame any man, who after hearing all you have to say against Romanism, would choose to remain a Roman Catholic.

A. "Who am I that I should judge another man's servant?" I am perfectly convinced that the Church of Rome has greatly corrupted the simplicity of the Christian doctrine; and I have accordingly separated myself from her communion. My duty is to declare this, my own conviction, that others may be assisted in judging for themselves. But I condemn doctrines, and not men.

R. I believe you said, Sir, that the Church of Rome has made additions to the Gospel out of her own fancy: has she also made any omissions in the articles of her faith?

A. No. It pleased Providence to preserve the whole of the Christian faith in her keeping, without diminution or curtailment. The true Gospel was thus kept entire during the ages of general ignorance, under the heap of her superstitions, like live seeds, which to spring up want nothing but the removal of some layer of stones and rubbish. Had she been permitted to cast off some of the essential articles of the apostolic doctrine, as other sects do, the work of the Reformation would have been difficult. But when Luther and the other Reformers had removed the superstitious additions of the Romanists, the whole truth, as it is in Christ, appeared very nearly in its original purity; and as both Rome and the Church of England agree in every thing which is really a part of the apostolic doctrine, we cannot be charged with innovation.

R. Yet they say that Protestants have a new religion.

A. You must not forget, that by the name *Protestant* we are only to understand a Christian who rejects the authority of the pope and his Church. In this there is no new religion, for the New Testament does not acknowledge such authority. The New Testament is the original charter of Christians; any thing

under the name of Christianity, which we do not find there, must be an abuse of more modern date than the charter. The additions made by the Church of Rome are, it is true, very old; but the foundations over which she has built her structure must be older still. That foundation, the *Testament*, is our religion; and we do not wish to prove our religion older than Christ.

R. I wish you would have the goodness to mention the additions and innovations which the Church of Rome has made to the true and scriptural religion of Christ.

A. I will, with great pleasure, in our next conversation.

DIALOGUE III.

Conduct of the Protestant Churches and of the Roman Catholic Church compared—Some Account of the Innovations made by Rome—Tradition—Transubstantiation—Confession—Relics and Images.

Author. I PROMISED at our last meeting, to give you an account of the innovations which the Church of Rome has made, and the human additions by which she has adulterated the pure doctrines of the Gospel. But, before I begin, I must ask your opinion upon a case which I heard some time ago.

Reader. I will give it you, Sir, to the best of my knowledge.

A. The people of two neighbouring islands, which acknowledged the authority of the same sovereign, received each a governor from the metropolis. One of the governors presented himself with his commission in one hand, and with the book of the colonial laws in the other. "Gentlemen," he said, "here is the king's commission, which authorizes me to govern

you according to these laws. I will direct my officers to get them printed, and every one of you shall have a copy in his possession. If ever any one of you should think that I am stepping beyond my powers, or governing against the laws, he may examine the point and consult his friends about it; and if, after all, he feels inclined not to be under me any longer, I will not at all molest him in his removal to the neighbouring island, carrying away every thing that belongs to him." The other governor pursued quite a different course. He appeared in the capital with all the pomp and show of a king. He gave out that he had authority from the sovereign, not only to govern according to the standing laws, but to make new statutes at his will and pleasure. At the same time, he employed his officers to deprive the people of all the copies of the colonial laws that were to be found, and published heavy penalties against any one who should possess or read them without his leave, or in a copy which had not his own interpretation of the statutes. Some high-spirited individuals presented a petition to the new governor, stating "that they were perfectly willing and ready to obey any one commissioned by their king; but still they conceived themselves entitled to possess a copy of the laws of the country; that if the monarch himself had empowered him to make additional laws, they would make no objection to that, provided he showed an authentic copy of his commission." The governor grew quite furious upon reading this remonstrance, and answered that he would not show any document relating to his power of making new laws; that the king had conferred upon him this privilege, not in writing, but by a message; and, finally, that if the petitioners did not obey him in silence, he would employ force against them. "Do, Sir, but prove to us your commission from the king, and we are ready to obey without a murmur." "Take those fellows," said the governor, "and let them die by fire." The order being executed, a number of

citizens tried to escape from the island, but troops were stationed at every port and creek, and such as were found in the act of getting away were, without mercy, put to the sword, or confined to dungeons, till they swore that they would receive whatever the governor commanded, as if it had been a part of the book of the laws. To complete the picture of this governor, I will tell you that there was not one among the laws which he added to the written statutes of the colonies, but evidently procured both to him and to his officers an increase of wealth and power. The question I wish you to answer is, under which of these two governors would you advise a man to place himself?

R. I answer without a doubt,—under the first.

A. What! without any farther inquiry; without examining the book of colonial laws; without hearing the reasons of the other governor?

R. If I understood you rightly, the tyrant governor (for he deserves no better name) does not wish to settle the matter by reasoning: he wishes to be believed on his word, and puts to death even those who would avoid his power by flight. He must be an impostor,—an usurper, who grounds his authority on his own word, and his word on his tyranny.

A. Oh! my friend, how justly you have given your verdict! *The pope* is the man. My parable applies literally to the case between the Roman Church and the Protestants. We, the Protestant clergy, declare to the world, that our bishops, priests, and deacons, have no authority but what the Scriptures confer upon us, for the instruction and edification of the people. We show them our commission in the book of God's word, and leave them to judge whether they are bound or not to listen to our instructions. If any one wishes to leave us, he is at liberty to do so: we use no arts, no compulsion, to keep any one within the pale of our church. To those who remain under our guidance we give no other rule or law but the Scripture; our articles declare that nothing contained in

them is to be believed on any other consideration but the clear warrant of the holy Scriptures. But hear the conditions which the pope presents to mankind : " Come to me," he says, " as you wish to be saved ; for none can escape the punishment of hell who rejects my authority." I ask him for the proof that God has limited salvation, by making it pass exclusively through his hands. He answers me, that he and his clergy or Church have received the power of interpreting the Scriptures, and adding to them several articles of faith ; and that, by virtue of that power, I must believe what he affirms. I rejoin, that if the Scriptures said that the bishop of Rome and his Church were to be the infallible interpreters of the written word of God, and that they had power to add to the laws therein contained, I should be ready to obey : but since the Scriptures are silent upon a point of such importance, I will not believe the pope, who is the party that would gain by the forced interpretation of those passages on which he wishes to build his power over the whole Church. He now grows angry, and calls me a heretic, protesting that the Scripture is clear as to his being the head of the Church, and vicar of Christ. Are the Scriptures so clear in favour of your authority, my lord the pope ? Why, then, are you and yours so alarmed when you see the Scriptures in the hands of the people ? If your commission from God is clear, why do you not allow every man, woman, and child, to read it ? Because (says the pope) they are ignorant. Ignorant, indeed ! is the meanest child too ignorant to know the person whom his father appoints to teach him ? Is a stranger to drag a child away, and keep him under his control, without the father saying, " this is to be your teacher ; I wish you to obey him like myself ?" The only thing, in fact, which the child can perfectly understand, is the appointment of the person who is to be his tutor : and are we to be told, that, because the mass of Christians are children in knowledge, they must blindly believe

the man who presents himself, rod in hand, saying to them, "follow me, for I have a letter of your father's, in which he desires you to be under my command?" "Show me the letter," says the Christian. "You are a silly babe," says the pope, "and must let me explain the letter to you." "Yes," says the Christian, "but all I want is to see that my father mentions your name, and desires me to obey you." "No:" is the pope's answer; "my name is not in the letter, but St. Peter's name is there: St. Peter was at Rome, and I am at Rome, and, therefore, it is clear that you must obey me." "But tell me, I pray you, my lord the pope, does the letter say even that St. Peter was ever at Rome?" "No; but I tell you he was," says the holy father. "Still another question, good my lord: is it in the letter, that Peter was to govern all Christians more than any other of the apostles as long as he lived?" "The letter does not say it, but I do." "So it seems that all your authority must depend, not upon any command of my heavenly Father, but upon your own word. If so, I will not follow you; but put myself under instructors who will read my Father's words to me, without requiring from me more than what I find therein enjoined." Happy, my friend, is that Christian who can speak thus out of the pope's grasp; for he is a fierce schoolmaster, and would tear the skin off any one's back who should not take his word in points relating to his authority.

R. I see, Sir, that the pope is just like the proud usurping governor you described. He grounds his claims on his own authority, and supports his authority by the sword. But what strikes me above all, is his fear of the Scriptures. If the Scriptures were favourable to him, he would not object to their free circulation. I believe you said that the pope had introduced many things into the Church which are not to be found in the Scriptures.

A. Very many, indeed; and what is still more remarkable, not one of which but is decidedly to his

own profit. Here again the comparison between the pope and the Protestant clergy is enough to decide any rational man who is in doubt what church to follow. Any one who is capable of making the comparison, will clearly perceive, that on whatever points the Church of Rome, and the Protestant Churches (especially ours of England) agree, the Scriptures are their common foundation. But as soon as they disagree, the Church of Rome is seen striving after wealth and power in the articles which she adds to the Scriptures; while the Protestant clergy evidently relinquish both emolument and influence, by their refusal to follow the Romanists beyond the authority of the word of God. I will give you instances of this, as I proceed in the enumeration of the principal points of difference.

Tradition is one of the most essential subjects of dispute between Protestants and Romanists. The Romanists declare that the Scriptures alone are not sufficient for salvation; but that there is the word of God by *hearsay*, which is superior to the word of God in *writing*. By this *hearsay*, for tradition is nothing else, they assure the world that the Scripture must be explained; so that if the Scripture says *white*, and tradition says *black*, a Roman Catholic is bound to say, that *white* means *black* in God's written word.

R. But, Sir, how can they be sure of that *hearsay* or tradition? Every one knows how little we can depend on reports.

A. They pretend a kind of perpetual inspiration, a miraculous knowledge which can distinguish the true from the false traditions. The existence, however, of that miracle, people must take upon their assertion.

R. And who do they say has that miraculous knowledge?

A. Their divines are not well agreed about it. Some say the miracle is constantly worked in the

pope ; others believe that it does not take place but when the pope and his bishops meet in council.

R. Then, after all, the Romanists cannot be certain at any time that the miracle has taken place. Would it not be better to abide by the Scriptures, and judge of those *hearsays* or traditions by what we certainly know to be God's word ?

A. That is exactly what we Protestants do.

R. Yet one difficulty occurs to me. Is it not by a kind of *hearsay* or tradition that we know the New Testament to have been really written by the Apostles and Evangelists ?

A. What then ?

R. You see, Sir, that tradition seems to be a good ground of faith.

A. Now, tell me : if you had the title-deeds of an estate, which had descended from father to son, till they came into your possession, what would you say to an attorney who should come to you with a *hearsay*, that the original founder of the estate had desired his descendants to submit their lands and chattels to the family of the said attorney, that they might keep it and manage it for ever, explaining every part of the title-deeds according to the traditional knowledge of their family ?

R. I should be sure to show him the way out of my house, without hearing another word about his errand.

A. Yet he might say, your title-deeds are only known to be genuine by *tradition*.

R. Yes, Sir ; but the title-deeds are something substantial, which may be known to be the same which my father received from my grandfather, and again my grandfather from his father, and so on ; but there is no putting seals or marks on flying words.

A. Well, you have answered most clearly one of the strongest arguments by which the Romanists endeavour to palm their traditions on the world. As

long as the Christians who had received instructions from the mouth of the apostles were alive, Saint Paul, for instance, might say to the Thessalonians, "*Hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle*;" because they could be sure that the words they had heard were Saint Paul's: but what mark could have been put on these unwritten words, to distinguish them as the true words of the apostle, after they had passed through the hands of three or four generations?

R. What is, after all, the advantage which the pope derives from these traditions?

A. They are to him of the most essential service. Without *tradition* his hands would be tied up by Scripture; but, by placing the Scripture under the control of these *hearsays*, the pope and his Church have been able to build up the monstrous system of their power and ascendancy. You know that one of the principal articles of the Roman Catholics is *transubstantiation*. This article would be searched for in vain in the Scriptures; for though our Saviour said of the bread, "this is my body," and of the wine, "this is my blood," the apostles could not understand these words in a corporal sense, as if Christ had said to them that he was holding himself in his own hands. Consequently, Saint Paul did not believe that the bread and wine were converted into the material Christ, by the words of consecration: but though he calls these signs the communion of the body and blood of Christ, he also calls them bread and cup¹. But as it was natural that the signs appointed by Christ to represent his body and blood, should be treated with reverence, there arose, in the earliest times, among Christians a confused notion of a *material* sanctity in the consecrated bread and wine. The clergy, partly from mistaken piety, and partly from a secret feeling of the increased importance which the notion conferred

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 15.

² 1 Cor. x. 16.

upon them, spoke of the elements used in the Lord's Supper, in a style of the most extravagant kind. This, of course, helped to increase the superstitious notions which were originally conceived by many of the laity. Thus, after many centuries, the Church of Rome, becoming fully aware of the advantages which arose to its clergy from the belief that every priest could bring Christ to his hands, by means of a few words, declared this doctrine as an article of faith necessary to salvation. The people were, therefore, told that the pope knew by *tradition*, that, by the words of consecration, every particle of bread and wine was converted into the body of our Saviour: that if you divide a consecrated wafer¹ into atoms, every one of those atoms contains a whole God and man; and that the presence is so material, that if, as it has happened sometimes, a mouse eats up part of the consecrated bread, it certainly eats the body of Christ; and that, if a person should be seized with sickness, so as to throw up the contents of his stomach immediately after receiving the sacrament, the filth should be gathered up carefully and kept upon the altar: this I have seen done. I could relate many more absurdities, which would shock any but a Roman Catholic, to whom habit has made them familiar. I must not, however, give up this subject without pointing more particularly to the advantages which the doctrine of transubstantiation brings to the Roman Catholic clergy.

I have already told to you the superstitious veneration which the Roman Catholics pay to their priests. A priest, even when raised to that office from the lowest of the people, is entitled to have his hands kissed with the greatest reverence by every

¹ The Roman Catholics use not common bread for the Sacrament, but a white wafer with the figure of a cross made upon it, by the mould in which the wafer is baked. By this means they remove the common appearance of bread, which would be too striking and visible an argument against their doctrine.

one, even a prince of his communion. Children are taught devoutly to press their innocent lips upon those hands, to which, as they are told, the very Saviour of mankind, who is in heaven, comes down daily. The laws of some Roman Catholic countries are, with regard to priests, made according to the spirit of these religious notions:—a priest cannot be tried by the judges of the land for even the most horrible crimes. Murders of the most shocking nature have often been perpetrated by priests in my country: but I do not recollect an instance of ~~their~~ being put to death, except when the murdered person was also a priest. I knew the sister of a young lady who was stabbed to the heart at the door of the church, where the murderer, who was her confessor, had, a few minutes before, given her absolution! He stabbed her in the presence of her mother, to prevent the young lady's marriage, which was to take place that day. This monster was allowed to live, because he was a priest.—What but the belief in transubstantiation could secure to the clergy impunity of this kind? Even in Ireland, where the law makes no difference between man and man, a priest can take liberties with the multitude, and exert a despotic command over them, which the natural spirit of the Irish would not submit to from the first nobleman in the kingdom. For all this the Catholic clergy have to thank *tradition*, for without that pretended source of revelation, it would have been impossible to make whole nations believe that a priest (as they declare) can turn a wafer into God.

R. Was it not in the power of the Reformers to have preserved the same veneration to themselves by encouraging the belief in transubstantiation?

A. It was so much in their power, that even when England had shaken off the authority of the pope, many were burnt alive for denying the coporeal presence of Christ in the sacrament. The mass of the people were so blind and obstinate upon that point,

that not one of the Protestant Martyrs of the reign of Queen Mary but could have saved his life by declaring in favour of transubstantiation. Nothing, indeed, but an almost supernatural courage, and an apostolic love of revealed truth, could have enabled the Protestant clergy to oppose and subdue the Romanist doctrine of the sacrament.

R. I believe, Sir, that the doctrine you speak of, was valuable to the clergy in other respects.

A. It was, and is still, to the Romanist priesthood a never-failing source of profit. I do not mean to attribute interested views to individual priests. In all ages and countries, and under all denominations, some men may be found who deceive for the sake of their own advantages. But it is most unfair to suspect any individual of deliberate imposture, unless we have strong grounds to support such suspicions. But, at the same time, you must remember that large bodies of men will do things of which few individuals of that body would not be ashamed, if done or permitted by them singly. So it is in regard to the advantages derived by the Romanist clergy from the belief in transubstantiation. The notion that they have the power of offering up the whole living person of Christ, whenever they perform mass, paved the way to the doctrine which makes the mass itself a repetition of the great sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. Under the idea that the priest who performs the bloodless sacrifice, as they call it, can appropriate the whole benefit of it to the individual whom he mentions in his secret prayer before or after consecration, the Roman Catholics are eager all over the world to purchase the benefit of masses for themselves; to obtain the favour of saints by having the masses done in their praise; and finally to save the souls of their friends out of purgatory by the same means.

R. I have heard a great deal about purgatory; but I do not exactly understand what the doctrine is which the Romanists hold about it,

A. They believe that there is a place very like hell, where such souls as die, having received absolution of their sins, are made to undergo a certain degree of punishment; like criminals who, being saved from the gallows, are kept to hard work as a means of correction. There is a strong mixture of a very ancient heresy in the religious system of the Roman Catholics, which leads them to attribute to pain and suffering the power of pleasing God. It was that notion that first produced the idea of purgatory; and it is the same notion that induces the devout and sincere among them almost to kill themselves with stripes, with fasts, and many other self-inflicted penances.

R. I have heard that the heathen in India do the same.

A. The religious practices of those heathens, and many among the Roman Catholics, are remarkably similar. But we must not lose sight of the offspring of Roman Catholic *tradition*, and the profitable account to which the Church of Rome has turned it. *Tradition* alone could have been brought to the aid of purgatory. But the doctrine once being received by the people, became a true gold-mine to the pope and his priesthood. This was obtained by teaching the Roman Catholics, that the pope, as vicar of Christ, had the power to relieve or release the souls in purgatory, by means of what they call indulgences. These indulgences were so frequently purchased in all countries before the Reformation, that kings and governments, even such as were staunch Catholics, bitterly complained that the popes drained their kingdoms of money. Incalculable treasures have flowed into the lap of the Roman Catholic clergy, for which they have to thank the doctrine of purgatory. The reason is clear:—the pope knew too well his interest, not to tack the doctrine of transubstantiation and the mass on that of the souls in purgatory fire. If a mass, they said, is a repetition of the great sacrifice on the cross, and it is in the power of the priest to apply the bene-

fit of it to any one, then, by sending such a relief to a soul in purgatory, that soul has the greatest chance of being set free from those burning flames, and of entering at once into heaven. Who that believes this doctrine will spare his pocket when he thinks that his dearest relations are asking the aid of a mass to escape out of the burning furnace! You will find, accordingly, that no Roman Catholic who can afford it, omits to pay as many priests as possible to say masses for his deceased relations and friends: and that the poor of that persuasion, both in England and Ireland, establish clubs for the purpose of collecting a fund, out of which a certain number of masses are to be purchased for each member that dies. Their accounts are regularly kept, and if any member dies without having paid his subscription, he is allowed to be tormented to the full amount of his debt in the other world, where the difference between rich and poor, according to these doctrines, is greater than in this life. A rich man may sin away, and, having obtained absolution, settle the remainder of his debt with masses: the poor must be a beggar even at the very gates of heaven, and trust to his savings, properly kept and improved by a club, or to the charity of the rich, to escape out of that purgatory which you may properly call the *debtor's side* of hell.

R. Perhaps the Romanists will say that God will not allow the rich people to get off by the great number of masses, but will give the benefit of them to the poor.

A. So they say, when the absurdity of their doctrine stares them in the face. But even this contrivance to evade the difficulty objected to their doctrine, has been turned into an increase of profit to the clergy. "Since," it is said, "no man can be certain that one or more masses, or indulgences, will be allowed to avail the person for whom they are purchased, it behoves those who have worldly means to repeat the remittance as often as possible, that your friend or

yourself may at last have his turn." You see, therefore, that even the doubts which might have endangered the sale of the popish wares, are made, by an effort of ingenuity, to increase the demand in the market. Without the fresh discovery, that God appropriates to the more deserving poor the masses and indulgences sent to the wealthy dead, a mass or plenary indulgence a head, would be more than sufficient to keep purgatory empty. The case is very different when you are acquainted with the doubt in which you must be left as to the effect of your purchases; so that, if possible, you must continue them for ever.

R. What do you mean by indulgences?

A. That wonderful storehouse of knowledge, *tradition*, has informed the popes that there is somewhere an infinite treasure of spiritual merits, of which they have the key; so that they may give to any one a property in them, to supply the want of their own. A man, for instance, has been guilty of murder, adultery, and all the most horrid crimes, during a long life; but he repents on his death-bed; the priest gives him absolution, and his soul goes to purgatory. There he might be for millions of years; but if you can procure him a full or plenary indulgence from the pope, or if he obtained it before death, all the merits which he wanted are given him, and he flies direct to heaven.

R. Sir, are you really in earnest?

A. You have only to look into the *London Roman Catholic Directory*, and you will find the appointed days, when every individual of that persuasion is empowered by the pope to liberate one soul out of purgatory by means of a plenary indulgence. These indulgences are sold in Spain by the king, who buys them from the pope, and retails them with great profit. I have told you, my friend, and will continue to prove it, that there is not a doctrine for which the Church of Rome contends against the Protestants, but is a source of profit or power (which comes to the same) in the hands of the clergy. Indeed, I could fill volumes upon

this subject ; but time presses, and I must not omit saying a few words about Confession. Do you not perceive, in an instant, that whoever has a man's conscience in his keeping, must have the whole man in his power ?

R. It appears to me impossible to doubt it ; and, in fact, the better the man, the more he must be in the power of his priest, for the priest is his conscience, and the good man is most anxious to follow that which conscience suggests.

A. Never, my good friend, was a plan of usurpation and tyranny set up that can equal that of the Church of Rome in boldness. Her object is to deprive men both of their understanding and their will, and make them blind tools of her own. She proclaims that the perfection of faith consists in reducing one's mind to an implicit belief in whatever doctrines she holds, without any examination, or with a previous resolution to abide by her decision, whether, after examination, they appear to you true or false. She then declares a renunciation of one's conscience into the hands of her priests the very height of human perfection. Let those who in England are trying every method of disguising the Roman Catholic doctrine, show a single pious book of common reputation in the Roman Catholic Church, which does not make unlimited obedience to a confessor, or religious superior, the safest and most perfect way to salvation. No, I should not hesitate to assert it in the hearing of all the world : in the same proportion as a Roman Catholic has an understanding and a will of his own upon religious matters, or matters connected in any way with religion, in that same degree he acts against the duties to which he is bound by his religious profession.

R. I do not well understand the Romanist belief on the necessity of Confession.

A. The Romanist Church makes the confession of every sin by *thought, word, and deed*, necessary previous to receiving absolution from a priest ; and

teaches that, without absolution, when there is a possibility of obtaining it, God will not grant remission of sins. The most sincere repentance, according to the Catholics, is not sufficient to save a sinner, without confession and absolution, where there is a possibility of applying to a priest. On the other hand, they assert that even imperfect repentance, a sorrow arising from the fear of hell, which they call *attrition*, will save a sinner who confesses and receives absolution. The evident object of doctrines so inconsistent with the letter and spirit of the Scriptures, is, no doubt, that of making the priesthood absolute masters of the people's consciences. They must some time or other (every Roman Catholic is, indeed, bound to confess at least once a year, under pain of excommunication) entrust a priest with the inmost secrets of their hearts; and this, under the impression that if any one sin is suppressed from a sense of shame, absolution makes them guilty of sacrilege. The effects of this bondage, the reluctance which young people, especially, have to overcome, and the frequency of their making up their minds to garble Confession, in spite of their belief that they increase the number and guilt of their sins by silence, are evils which none but a Roman Catholic priest can be perfectly acquainted with.

R. I thought, Sir, that Confession acted as a check upon men's consciences, and that it often caused restitution of ill-gotten money.

A. I never hear that paltry plea, so frequently used by Roman Catholic writers in this country, without indignation. It seems as if they wished to bribe men's love of money to the support of their doctrines. In a case where the main interests of religion and morality are so deeply concerned, it is a sort of insult to hold up the chance of recovering money through the hands of a priest, as if to draw the attention from the monstrous evils which are inseparable from the Romanist Confession. The truth is, that restitution is not a whit more probable among Roman Catholics, than

among any other denomination of Christians. There is not a Protestant who does not firmly believe the necessity of restitution in order to obtain pardon from God. Though I have lived only fifteen years¹ in a Protestant country, the voluntary restitution of a sum of money by a poor person, whom the grace of God had called to a truly Christian course of life, has happened within my notice. I acted as a confessor, in Spain, for many years, and from my own experience can assure you, that Confession does not add one single chance of restitution. I believe, on the contrary, that the generality of Roman Catholics depend so much on the mysterious power which they attribute to the absolution of the priest, that they greatly neglect the conditions on which that absolution is often given. The Protestant, who earnestly and sincerely wishes for pardon from God, knows that he cannot obtain it unless he is equally earnest in his endeavours to make restitution; but when the Romanist has assured the confessor that he will try his best to indemnify those he has injured, the words of absolution are to him a sort of charm, that removes the guilt at once, and consequently relieves his uneasiness about restitution. One of the greatest evils of Confession is, that it has changed the genuine *repentance* preached in the Gospel—that conversion and change of life which is the only true external sign of the remission of sins through Christ—into a ceremony which silences remorse at the slight expense of a doubtful, temporary sorrow for past offences. As the day of Confession approaches (which, for the greatest part, is hardly once a year) the Romanist grows restless and gloomy. He mistakes the shame of disclosure for sincere repentance of his sinful actions. He, at length, goes through the disagreeable task, and feels relieved. The old score is now cancelled, and he may run into spiritual debt with a lighter heart. This I know from my own experience, both as confessor and

* This was written in 1825.

as penitent. In the same characters, and from the same experience, (though I have to thank God that through a natural sense of honour, there is not the least subject of remorse upon my conscience connected with the manner in which I exercised my priestly authority) I can assure you that the practice of Confession is exceedingly injurious to the purity of mind enjoined in the Scriptures. "Filthy communication" is inseparable from the confessional: the priest, in the discharge of the duty imposed on him, by his Church, is bound to listen to the most abominable descriptions of all manner of sins. He must inquire into every circumstance of the most profligate course of life. Men and women, the young and the old, the married and the single, are bound to describe to the confessor the most secret actions and thoughts, which are either sinful in themselves, or may be so from accidental circumstances. Consider the danger to which the priests themselves are exposed—a danger so imminent, that the popes have, on two occasions, been obliged to issue the most severe laws against confessors who openly attempt the seduction of their female penitents. I will not, however, press this subject, because it cannot be done with sufficient delicacy. Let me conclude by observing, that no invention of the Roman Church equals this, as regards the power it gives to the priesthood.

R. I cannot help wondering how the Church of Rome could persuade men to submit to such a revolting and dangerous practice as that of Confession.

A. This enormous abuse grew up gradually and imperceptibly, together with the whole of the Romanist system. It was the practice in the beginning of the Christian Church, to exclude the scandalous sinners from public worship, till they had shown their repentance by confessing their misconduct before the congregation. This discipline was found, in the course of some time, to be impracticable; and the act of humiliation, which at first was required to be public, was

changed into a private acknowledgment to the bishop of such sins only as had occasioned the exclusion of the sinner from church at the time of worship. The bishops, a little after, began to refer such acts of public reconciliation with the Church to some of their priests. The growing ignorance of after-times made people believe that this act of external reconciliation was a real absolution of the moral guilt of sin ; and the Church of Rome, with that perpetual watchfulness by which she has never omitted an opportunity of increasing her power, foisted upon the Christian world what she calls the sacrament of penance, obliging her members, as they wish for pardon of their sins, to reveal them to a priest.

R. Is there nothing in Scripture to support that practice ?

A. Nothing but the word *confessing*, which, as you will observe, means only, wherever it occurs, the acknowledgment of our sins before God ; or, that of our mutual faults to our fellow Christians. *Confess your faults one to another*, says St. James¹. The Romanist will make us believe, that by *one to another*, the holy apostle means confessing to the priest. By thus distorting the sense of the Scripture, and calling in the convenient help of their own invented tradition, they have set no limits to their encroachments upon the spiritual liberty of the Christian world. Their love of power had, indeed, carried them so far, that in enlarging the foundations of their influence, they established some of their doctrines without even a word in the Scriptures on which to build their fanciful systems. Have you ever found any mention of relics in the Bible ; or do you recollect that it ever mentions images, but to forbid the worshipping of them ?

R. Certainly not. But do you believe, Sir, that relics and images are also instruments of power to the Church of Rome ?

¹ Chap. v. ver. 16.

A. The city of Rome has carried on, for ages, a trade in bones, which, besides the donations in money, (for they avoid receiving money as *payment*,) made by those, who from all parts of the world come or send thither to procure them, has been the cause of building churches, with large endowments for the clergy, in almost every province in Christendom.

R. But were those bones really from the bodies of the saints whose names they gave to them?

A. Nothing can equal the impudence with which the bones really taken out of the public burial grounds, where the ancient Romans buried their slaves, have been sent about under the names of all the martyrs, confessors, and virgins, mentioned in the Roman Catholic legends. The pope claims the power of what is called *christening* relics, and the devout Romanists believe that when their holy father has thus given a name to a skull or a thigh bone, it is equally valuable as if it had been taken from the body of their favourite saint. They are not generally aware that what is thus *christened*, is probably part of the skeleton of some ancient heathen. But to give you an idea of the credulity which the popes have encouraged on this point, I have seen the treasury of relics which belongs to the kings of Spain; where the monk who keeps it, shows to all who come to visit the church of the *Escorial*, near Madrid, the whole body, as it is pretended, of one of the children who were put to death by Herod. But there is still a more monstrous piece of impudence in the same exhibition. A glass vial, set in gold, is shown, with some milk of the Virgin Mary. These and a hundred other such relics are presented to be worshipped by the people; all duly certified by the pope or his ministers. At the cathedral of Seville, the town where I was born, there is, among other relics, one of the teeth of Christopher, a saint who is said to have been a giant. The tooth was procured from Rome, and is to be seen in a silver and glass casket, through which the holy relic may be admired by

the worshippers. It is clear, however, that the tooth, before which the pope allows his spiritual children to kneel, belonged to a huge animal of the elephant kind. These impositions have been at all times carried on so carelessly by the Romish priesthood, that it was necessary, in some cases, to declare that the bodies of some saints had been miraculously multiplied: else people would have discovered the fraud by finding the same saint at different places. The priests themselves are often aware of these absurdities; but they must bow their heads in silence. I will, however, tell you a good joke of a French priest of high rank, who having no religion himself, as it often happens to those of his profession in Roman Catholic countries, submitted quietly to the established superstition, though he would now and then give vent to a humorous sneer. He had been travelling in Italy, and in the Catholic parts of Germany, where the collection of relics, kept in every great church, had been boastingly displayed to him. The priests of a famous abbey in France were doing the same, when among other wonders, "here," they said to the traveller, "is the head of John the Baptist."—"Praised be heaven!" answered the wag-gish priest, "this is the third head of the holy Baptist which I have been happy enough to hold in my hands." I have before me an original certificate, dated *Rome, 7th May, 1826*, signed and sealed by Fr. Joseph Perugini, a bishop and keeper of the pope's collection of relics, called *sacrarium*, making it known that in a silver gilt case, of which a description is given, there are, "*most indubitably contained*," particles of the column of our Lord Jesus Christ, (i. e. of the column to which, according to an unfounded tradition, he is said to have been bound when scourged,) of the dress of the Virgin Mary, of the cloak of St. Joseph, her husband, and of the bones of St. Sebastian. Such barefaced impostures, so solemnly authorized, ought to make every spiritual subject of the Pope instantly forswear their treacherous guide.

R. I hope the jolly priest did not pay dear for his wit.

A. It would have been a serious matter in Spain : but there has always existed a very strong party of disguised infidels in France, where the pope never succeeded in his attempts to establish the Inquisition. The consequence was, that the priests were greatly checked by the general laugh which was often raised against them. He that would know genuine Popery, must go to Spain—the country where it has been allowed to grow and unfold itself into full size. There you would see all the engines of Rome at work, and perfectly understand the true and original object of her inventions. To show you at one glance the benefit derived by the priests from image worship, I will tell you what happened at Madrid, during a residence of three years, which I made in that most Catholic capital. In one of the meanest parts of the town the ragged children, who are always running about the streets, found an old picture which had been thrown, with other rubbish, upon a dunghill. Not knowing what the picture was, they tied it to a piece of rope, and were dragging it about, when an old woman in the neighbourhood looked at the canvas, and found upon it the head of a Virgin Mary. Her screams of horror at the profanation which she beheld scared away the children, and the old woman was left in possession of the treasure. The gossips of the neighbourhood were anxious to make some amends to the picture for the past neglect and ill-treatment, and they all contributed towards the expence of burning a lamp, day and night, before it, in the old woman's house. A priest getting scent of what was going on, took the scratched virgin under his patronage, framed the canvas, and added another light. All the rich folks who heard of this new-found image, came to pray before it, and gave something to the priest and the old woman, who were now in close partnership. In a very short time the amount of the daily donations enabled the joint pro-

prietors of the picture to build a fine chapel, with a comfortable house adjoining it for themselves. The chapel was crowded from morning till night ; not a female, high or low, but firmly believed that her life and safety depended upon the favour of that particular picture : the rich endeavoured to obtain it by large sums of money for masses to be performed, and candles to be burnt before it ; and the poor stinted their necessary food to throw a mite into the box which hung at the door of the chapel. I do not relate to you old stories : I state what I myself have seen. Yet, what happened at Madrid under my own eyes had constantly taken place in the popish kingdoms of Europe, till the Reformation gave a check to the Romanist priesthood. There is scarcely a town or village of some note in Europe but had a rich sanctuary, where monks lived, mostly in vice and idleness, at the expence of the neighbourhood. The origin of these places was perfectly similar every where : a shepherd found an image of the Virgin in the hollow of a tree ; (most assuredly placed there on purpose to be thus found ;) an old woman drew another from the bottom of a well ; a stranger had asked for lodgings for a night at a cottage—he was not to be found in the morning ; but, on searching the room where he slept, a small Virgin Mary was discovered. The nearest bishop was sure to come with his priests, holding lighted tapers, and carry such images in procession to his church ; and declare that they had been miraculously sent to the faithful ! Those found in the tree and well, had fallen from heaven : the vanished stranger was an angel, who had carved the image during the night.

R. Such images put me in mind of what is said in the *Acts of the Apostles* about the great Diana of the Ephesians, which had fallen from heaven, and for the sake of which the people made a riot, in which they would have murdered Saint Paul¹

¹ Acts xix. 35.

A. The Church of Rome has so closely copied the idolatrous superstitions of the pagans, that all persons not blinded by the fanatic zeal of that Church are struck with the great similarity. Their lighted candles, their frankincense, their images from heaven, many ceremonies of their mass, many forms of their private worship, are just the same as formed a part of the service done formerly to the idols of the heathens. Even the manner of acknowledging the pretended miracles, by hanging up in the temples little figures of wax, or pictures representing the part of the body which is supposed to have been supernaturally healed, or the accident from which the person escaped, is constantly practised, wherever the pope alone directs his flock, without fearing a laugh from Protestant neighbours. If the figures acknowledging miracles performed by images throughout the realms of popery were to be reckoned, the miracles would amount to some hundreds a day.

R. But how can people believe in such a number of miracles?

A. The Church of Rome, my friend, is like a large and showy quack-medicine shop. There is not a disease, not an evil, for which the pope has not a *labelled* saint. People, when in fear of actual suffering, are apt to receive a certain relief from hope. You have only to say, try this or that medicine, and you will see the patient's eyes light up, like the poor man who has a kind of foretaste of riches from the moment he purchases a lottery ticket. The pope's spiritual quack-medicines are to be applied without doubt or hesitation, and not to be given up in despair; all you are allowed is to add some new saint to your former patron. Well, a poor creature is writhing with the toothache; he goes to the pope's shop, and finds that Saint Apollonia had all her teeth pulled out, and, therefore, takes pity on those who suffer pain in the teeth. He prays, buys a print of the saint, and lights up a candle before it. If the pain goes off, Saint

Apollonia cured him ; if at last the tooth is drawn, Saint Apollonia blunted the pain of the operation. So it is with every disease, with every undertaking,—a journey, a speculation ; even the most sinful and wicked actions are often commended by the lower classes of Roman Catholics to the care of their patron saint. Of this I have the most positive certainty. Miracles being thus expected at all times, and means supposed to possess a supernatural virtue being constantly used, under the idea that the most effectual way of receiving the looked-for benefit, is a strong persuasion of their efficacy, and a rejection of all doubt, (for doubt offends the implored saint) every accident is construed into a wonder : the failures are attributed to a want of faith, and the success, either complete or partial, which would have infallibly taken place in the natural course of things, is confidently proclaimed as a display of supernatural power. Add to this, that among the Roman Catholics there is a very common feeling of the same kind as that which anticipates thanks for the sake of securing favour. They, in fact, give credit to their saints beyond what they really believe, and flatter them by public acknowledgments, which they mean as a before-hand payment, which, in common honesty, must bind the receiver to complete the work. All this is done, not with an intent to deceive, but from that utter weakness of mind which a man cannot fail to contract, when brought up under a complete system of quackery, either spiritual or temporal : a system which encourages all sorts of fears, to insure the sale of imaginary remedies against them.

R. Do you think, Sir, that all Roman Catholics are in such a state of mind ?

A. By no means. There are various circumstances which make individual minds resist, more or less, the influence of their church. But this I can assure you, before the whole world, that whoever submits entirely to the guidance of Rome, must become a weak, superstitious being, unless his natural temper should dispose

him to join with superstition the violence and persecuting spirit of the bitterest bigotry.

R. If you can prove what you so broadly assert, I shall infer, that while the Roman Catholics uphold their Church for the sake of possessing an unerring guide, and thus having a decided advantage over the Protestant churches, who allow their members to exercise their judgment upon religious matters; it is only individual judgment and natural good sense that make Romanism assume a decent appearance among us.

A. Keep to your inference till we can renew this conversation, when I trust I shall satisfy you that it is supported by the most undeniable facts. Remember that I undertake to prove, that the Church of Rome leads her members into the most abject and lamentable superstition, credulity, and bigotry; that she keeps her subjects in bondage by the most tyrannical means; and that she is always ready to force men into subjection to her authority, in the same measure as they are off their guard to resist her encroachments.

DIALOGUE IV.

Superstitious Character of the Church of Rome: her Doctrine on Penance: her Miracles examined: Misery produced by her Will-worship: Apostolic Doctrine of Justification: Effects of Celibacy and Religious Vows: Persecuting Spirit of Romanism.

Author. I COME prepared to describe to you the character of the Church of Rome; and, in the first place, I am to prove that she exerts her whole power in making her members superstitious. I must, however, ask you, before I proceed, whether you have a clear idea of what is meant by the word *superstition*.

Reader. I believe I have a tolerably good notion of it; but, to say the truth, I should be at a loss to state clearly what I understand by that word.

A. My notion of it may be expressed thus : superstition consists in credulity, hopes, and fears, about invisible and supernatural things, upon fanciful and slight grounds. We call that man superstitious, who is ready to believe any idle story of ghosts and witches : who nails a horse-shoe upon the ship or barn, which he hopes by that means to preserve in safety : and dreads evil consequences from going out of doors the first time in the morning with his left foot foremost.

R. Does the Church of Rome encourage superstitions of this kind ?

A. She certainly encourages the same state of mind, though not exactly upon the same things. Every church may be compared to a great school or establishment for religious education. I will represent to you a pupil of that school, that you may infer what is taught in it ; and I will draw the picture from various Roman Catholics whom I have intimately known. Imagine my Romanist friend retiring to his bed in the night. The walls of the room are covered with pictures of all sizes. Upon a table there is a wooden or brass figure of our Saviour nailed to the cross, with two wax candles, ready to be lighted, at each side. Our Romanist carefully locks the door, lights up the candles, kneels before the cross, and beats his breast with his clenched right hand, till it rings again in a hollow sound. It is probably a Friday, a day of penance : the good man looks pale and weak. I know the reason—he has made but one meal on that day, and that on fish ; had he tasted meat, he feels assured he should have subjected his soul to the pains of hell. But the mortifications of the day are not over. He unlocks a small cupboard, and takes out a skull, which he kisses, and places upon the table at the foot of the crucifix. He then strips off part of his clothes, and with a scourge, composed of small twisted ropes hardened with wax, lays stoutly to the right and left, till his bare skin is ready to burst with accumulated blood.

The discipline, as it is called, being over, he mutters several prayers, turning to every picture in the room. He then rises to go to bed; but before he ventures into it, he puts his finger into a little cup which hangs at a short distance over his pillow, and sprinkles, with the fluid it contains, the bed and the room in various directions, and finally moistens his forehead in the form of a cross. The cup, you must know, contains holy water—water in which a priest has put some salt, making over it the sign of the cross several times, and saying some prayers, which the Church of Rome has inserted for this purpose in the mass-book. The use of that water, as our Roman Catholic has been taught to believe, is to prevent the devil from approaching the places and things which have been recently sprinkled with it; and he does not feel himself safe in his bed without the precaution which I have described. The holy water has, besides, an internal and spiritual power of washing away venial sins—those slight sins, I mean, which, according to the Romanists, if unrepented, or unwashed away by holy water, or the sign of the cross made by the hand of a bishop, or some other five or six methods, which I will not trouble you with, will keep the venial sinner in purgatory for a certain time. The operations of the devout Roman Catholic are probably not yet over. On the other side of the holy water cup, there hangs a frame holding a large cake of wax, with figures raised by a mould, not unlike a large butter-pat. It is an *Agnus Dei*, blest by the pope, which is not to be had except it can be imported from Rome. I believe the wax is kneaded with some earth from the place where the bones of the supposed martyrs are dug up. Whoever possesses one of these spiritual treasures, enjoys the benefit of a great number of indulgences; for each kiss impressed on the wax gives him the whole value of fifty or one hundred days employed in doing penance and good works; the amount of which is to be struck off the debt which he has to pay in purgatory.

I should not wonder if our good man, before laying himself to sleep, were to feel about his neck for his rosary or beads. Perhaps he has one of a particular value, and like that which I was made to wear next my skin, when a boy. A priest had brought it from Rome, where it had been made, if we believe the certificates, of bits of the very stones with which the first martyr, Stephen, was put to death. Being satisfied that the rosary hangs still on his neck, he arranges its companion, the scapulary, formed of two square pieces of the stuff which is exclusively worn by some religious order. By means of the scapulary, he is assured either that the Virgin Mary will not allow him to remain in purgatory beyond the Saturday next to the day of his death; or he is made partaker of all the penances and good works performed by the religious of the order to which the scapulary belongs. At last, having said a prayer to the angel who, he believes, keeps a constant guard over him, the devout Romanist composes himself to sleep, touching his forehead, his breast, and the two shoulders, to form the figure of a cross. The prayers and ceremonies of the morning are not unlike those of the night. Armed with the sprinkling of holy water, he proceeds to mass: if it happens to be one of the privileged days in which souls may be delivered out of purgatory, you will see him saying a certain number of prayers at different altars. He will repeat his rosary in honour of the Virgin Mary, dropping through his fingers either fifty-five or seventy-seven beads, which are strung in the form of a necklace. There may be a blessing with the *Sacrament*, which the good Catholic will not lose, for the sake of the plenary indulgence which the pope grants to such as are present. On that occasion you would see him kneeling and beating his breast, while the priest, in a splendid cloak of silk and gold, in the midst of lighted candles and the smoke of frankincense, makes the sign of the cross with a consecrated wafer, inclosed between two pieces of glass set in gold.—It would, indeed, be

an endless task were I to enumerate all the methods and contrivances of this kind recommended by the Church of Rome to all her members, and practised by all who are not careless of their spiritual concerns.—These are facts which no honest Roman Catholic will venture to deny. I, therefore, ask whether, since revelation is the only means we have of distinguishing between religion and superstition—between things and acts which really can influence our manner of being when we shall be removed to the invisible world: and fanciful contrivances which there is no reason to suppose connected with our spiritual welfare—I ask whether the whole system of the Church of Rome, for the attainment of Christian virtue, is not a chain of superstitious practices, calculated to accustom the mind to imaginary fear, and fly to the Church for fanciful remedies? St. Paul had a prophetic eye on this adulterated Christianity when he cautioned the Colossians¹, saying: *Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day; Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not, taste not, handle not, which all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have, indeed, a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body. I cannot conceive a more perfect resemblance than that which exists between the picture of a devout Romanist, and the will-worship described in this passage. Observe the distinction of days, the prohibition of certain meats, the wor-*

¹ Chap. ii.

shipping of angels, the numerous ordinances, the mortification and neglect of the body ; and, most of all, the losing hold of the Head, Christ, and substituting a constant endeavour to *increase* spiritually by *fleshly*, that is, external means, instead of fortifying by a simple and spiritual worship, the *bands and joints* through which alone the Christian can have nourishment, *and increase with the increase of God.*

R. I confess that the likeness is very striking. But I wish to know if all the *will-worship* of the Romanists is fully recommended by their Church.

A. It is, in the most solemn and powerful manner. You have only to look into the devotional books which are used among the Romanists, and you will find their bishops encouraging this kind of religious discipline in the most unqualified terms. I could read to you innumerable passages confirming and recommending more *fleshly ordinances* than ever the Jews observed : and this, too, in English Roman Catholic books, which, for fear of censure on the part of the Protestants, are generally more shy of disclosing the whole system of their Church, than those published abroad. But what settles the point at once, and shews that it is the Church of Rome, and not any private individual, that adulterates the character and temper of Christian virtue, I have only to refer you to their Common Prayer-book, which they call the *Breviary*. Now that is a book not only published and confirmed by three popes, but which they oblige their whole clergy to read daily, for at least an hour and a half. I say for *an hour and a half*, not meaning that the duty of reading the Breviary is measured by *time*, but because the most rapid utterance of what must be *read in an audible voice*, will not make the time daily employed on the Breviary much less. Such, indeed, is the importance which the Church of Rome attaches to that book, that she declares, any clergyman or monk who omits, even less than an eighth part of the appointed daily reading, guilty of sin worthy of hell,—a mortal sin, which de-

prives man of the grace of God. The *Breviary* contains psalms and collects, and lives of Saints, for every day of the year. Those lives are given as examples of what the Church of Rome declares to be Christian perfection, and her members are, of course, urged to imitate them as far as it may possibly be in every one's power. Now, I can assure you, having been for many years forced to read the *Breviary* daily, that there is not one instance of a Saint, whose worship is not grounded, by the Church of Rome, mainly upon the most extravagant practice of external ceremonies, and the most shocking use of their imaginary virtue of penance.

R. What do they mean by penance?

A. The voluntary infliction of pain on themselves to expiate their sins.

R. Do they not believe in the atonement of Christ?

A. They believe that the atonement is enough to save them from hell, but not from a temporal punishment of sin.

R. But have they not *plenary indulgences* to satisfy for that temporal punishment?

A. So they believe; but the truth is, that they cannot understand themselves upon the subject of penance and indulgences. Penance, however, the Romanist Church recommends even by depraving the sense of the Gospel in their translations. As there is nothing in the New Testament which can make self-inflicted pain a Christian virtue, the Romanists, wanting a text to support their practices, have rendered the third verse of the 13th chapter of Luke, "unless ye be *penitent*, ye shall all alike perish." Yet, this was not enough for their purpose, and as the same sentence is repeated in the 5th verse, there they slipped in the word *penance*. Their translation of that verse is, "unless ye shall do *penance*, you shall all alike perish." By the use of this word they make their laity believe, that both confession, which they call *penance*, and all the bodily mortifications which go among them by the same name, are commanded by Christ.

R. That, Sir, I look upon as very unfair.

A. And the more so, my friend; as in the original Gospel, the word used by the inspired writer is the same in both verses, and cannot by any possibility mean any thing but a *change of the mind*, which we properly express by the word *repent*.

R. What, Sir, is the origin of their attachment to bodily mortification?

A. A mean estimate of the atonement of Christ in some, and, in others, the example of some fanatics, whom, at an early period of the corruptions of Christianity, Rome declared to be saints and patterns of evangelical virtue. The monks, who took them for their models, gained an unbounded influence in the Church: and both by the practice of some enthusiasts among them, and by the stories of miracles, which they reported as being the reward of their bodily mortification, confirmed the opinion of the great merit of penance among the laity. Here, also, the aid which the doctrines invented by Rome give to each other, contributed to increase the error; for, as the popes teach that the *indulgences* which they grant are taken from the treasure of merits collected by the Saints, it is the interest of those who expect to escape from purgatory by the aid of indulgences, that the treasure of penances be well stocked; and they greatly enjoy the accounts of wonderful mortifications which their Church gives them in her Prayer-book.

R. Do you think those accounts extravagant?

A. I will give two or three, and you shall judge. You know that St. Patrick is one of the most favourite Saints among the Irish Roman Catholics, as having been the first who introduced Christianity into their island. The Church of Rome gives the following account of his daily religious practices, holding him up, of course, as a pattern, which if few can fully copy, every one will be the more perfect as he endeavours to imitate. The *Breviary* tells the Roman Catholics, that when their patron Saint was a slave, having his

master's cattle under his care, he used to rise before daylight, under the snows and rains of winter, to begin his usual task of praying *one hundred times* in the day, and again *one hundred times* in the night. When he was made a bishop, we are told that he repeated every day the one hundred and fifty psalms of the psalter, with a collection of canticles and hymns, and two hundred collects besides. He made it also a daily duty to kneel three hundred times, and to make the sign of the cross with his hand eight hundred times a day. In the night he recited one hundred psalms, and knelt two hundred times—passed one third of it up to the chin in cold water, repeating fifty psalms more, and then rested for two or three hours on a stone pavement.

R. I cannot believe it possible for a man to perform what you have said, unless he had the strength and velocity of a steam engine. That account must be false.

A. I will not enter into the question of its probability ; all I have to do with, is, the principle which it inculcates and proposes to the Roman Catholics. External ceremonies, and a course of self-murdering practices, are proposed by the Church of Rome, in nine out of ten lives of her Saints, as objects of imitation. In the same spirit, St. Catherine of Sienna is represented as so addicted to the practice of fasting, that heaven, to indulge her in the performance of that pretended virtue, kept her, by miracle, without food from Ash-Wednesday till Whit-Sunday. So the *Breviary* proclaims before the face of the world.

R. But does not our Church recommend fasting as a religious practice ?

A. The practice of checking our appetites, even those which we may indulge without sin, is a most useful exercise of the powers of the will over the inclinations of our passions. The man who cannot abstain from some savoury food, and is a slave to the cravings of his stomach, is little apt to control his inclinations when tempted to open sin. Upon this princi-

ple, and justly fearing that if the memory of fast was abolished, men might be inclined to believe that Protestantism encouraged gluttony and excess, the Church of England recommends a rational abstinence on certain days, which, especially when it is made to produce some savings to bestow upon the poor, must be acceptable in the sight of God. But neither are these fasts enjoined under the threat of damnation, as we find them in the Church of Rome, nor do they consist in a superstitious anxiety about the quality or quantity of food. The Roman Catholic fast is intended to produce *pain and suffering*, which is the object of their penances: ours is a check laid upon indulgence, an abstinence from *pleasure*. Theirs tends to that *neglecting of the body*, which St. Paul condemns (Coloss. ii.) and is the cause of weakness and disease: ours, to *keeping it under*, and giving ourselves to prayer, and even that is left to the discretion and free will of every individual.

R. How far does the Church of Rome recommend the infliction of pain, as penance?

A. To an excess that destroys every year many well-meaning and ardent persons, especially young women of that communion. These well-meaning but deluded creatures read the lives of Saints set forth by their Church, and there they find many females who are said to have arrived at great perfection, by living, like St. Elizabeth of Portugal, one half of the year on bread and water; besides the constant use of scourging their bodies, sleeping on the naked ground, wearing bandages with points that run into the flesh, plunging into freezing water, and ten thousand other methods of gradually destroying life. The Roman Catholic priests would make us believe that they always recommend penance in moderation. But when a young, tender, and ardent mind is taught that God is pleased with voluntary suffering, and reads that the Church of Rome has made Saints of those who killed themselves by penances, every thing which falls

short of actual self-murder will assume the appearance of moderation. The Church of Rome, in her Prayer-book or Breviary, commends St. Theresa, because "*her ardour in punishing the body was so vehement, as to make her use hair shirts, chains, nettles, scourges, and even to roll herself among thorns, regardless of a diseased constitution.*" These are the words of the Breviary: from which the enthusiastic Roman Catholic properly infers, that to disregard a diseased constitution, and hasten death, is a virtue. That such is the effect of the pope's lives of the Saints, is clear from what the Breviary relates of another female Saint, called Rose of Lima. She, it is said in the Roman Catholic Prayer-book, "from a desire to imitate St. Catherine," wore, day and night, three folds of an iron chain round her waist, a belt set with small needles, and an iron crown armed inside with points, all next the skin. She made to herself a bed of the unpolished trunks of trees, and filled up the chinks with pieces of broken pottery. The Breviary adds, that she did all this in spite of her "tortures from sickness," and was therefore frequently visited by saints, angels, and even our Saviour from heaven.

R. But, do Roman Catholics really believe in those visits?

A. A sincere Roman Catholic cannot disbelieve what his own Church so constantly teaches, without entertaining strange suspicions against the veracity of the organ and ground of his faith. Nothing can be more positively asserted, than these supernatural wonders; nothing more frequently repeated, than the thousands of miracles contained in the Breviary. If, therefore, a Roman Catholic believes them all, or the greatest part, he must be credulous like a child; if he disbelieves them all, or the greatest part, he must look on the popes and the Church of Rome, either as a set of deceivers, or of old women.

R. Are the miracles reported so unworthy of belief?

A. I could give you at once a satisfactory answer, just by relating some of the stories of miracles which the Roman Catholic Prayer-book contains. But I wish to settle a general point on this subject of miracles. What is your notion of a miracle?

R. I must repeat what I said when you asked me the same question as to superstition. I believe I know what a miracle is, and yet I cannot express myself clearly upon the subject.

A. A miracle is an evident interposition of God's power, by means of a change in the order which he has established in the visible world. I hope I shall be able to make my meaning clearer, by a very familiar illustration. Do you know the construction of a clock?

R. No, Sir.

A. So much the better for my purpose. What would you say if you saw the hand of the church clock go backward?

R. I should say the clock was out of repair.

A. What, if you saw it first point twelve, then instantly eleven, then in another moment run forward to one?

R. I should say somebody is behind moving the wheels: the watchmaker must be there.

A. Could you, without knowing the mechanism of the clock, be certain that the extraordinary change in its working was not the effect of mere accident?

R. If the clock had only stopt, or gone the wrong way, I might have supposed its being the effect of accident: but the change having, as we may say, a meaning, the experience of clocks which I have had all my life, is enough to convince me that the alteration in the course of the clock's working cannot be the effect of chance.

A. Suppose, besides, that a man had told you, while the clock was going regularly, that he was acquainted with the maker; that he knew he was behind the hour-plate, and that, in proof of this, he would request him

to move the hand backwards and forwards. Would you believe what he asserted, if you saw the clock acting accordingly?

R. Most certainly.

A. Well, then, if what we have said of the clock and the watchmaker, we apply, with due reverence, to the world which we see, and its great author, God; we shall have a pretty correct idea of miracles, and something like a rule to judge of them. The world, you know, and every thing in it, proceeds by established and invariable rules, infinitely more wonderful and regular than the pointing of a clock, or the working of the most admirable piece of machinery. Without being able to penetrate into the manner in which life is supported, we feel no doubt that when a person has been laid four days in the grave, he cannot be brought to life by any regular operation of nature. Now, imagine yourself standing in the crowd which surrounded our Saviour before the grave of Lazarus. Observe how, lifting up his eyes, Jesus addresses himself to his Father, the Creator of heaven and earth, the author and giver of life; and says, *Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me: and I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth: and he that was dead came forth*¹. Would this change in the usual laws of nature, this returning of the breath of life which had fled, be enough to convince you that the Maker of the world, though unseen, was really present and in direct communication with the visible person who had addressed him?

R. Most assuredly: just as I could not doubt that the watchmaker was personally present, by seeing the clock-hand move against the regular and established order, at the desire of his friend, whom you supposed standing with me in the church-yard.

¹ John xi. 41—44.

A. Let us still proceed with our illustration. Suppose that all that had passed between you, your friend, and the watchmaker, being observed by the people of the village, some boy came and told you, "Sir, while some of my companions were playing in the church-yard, the hour for school being on the point to strike, one of them cried out, Good mister watchmaker, put back the hand of the clock, and let us play another hour. As he said this the clock went back: this, Sir, is now done very frequently, and not only in our village, but all over the country."—Would you give the boy any credit?

R. I think I should be more inclined to give him a box on the ear?

A. Why?

R. Do you imagine me such a fool as to believe that a sensible man would be spoiling his clock, or altering the course of its working, to indulge the fancy of every idler? Why, Sir, I would not believe such a thing even upon better testimony than that of the children.

A. You are perfectly in the right, my friend; and if you keep in mind the principles by which you have decided upon the case I have supposed, it will be very easy for you to form a correct opinion of the spirit which prevails in the Church of Rome on the subject of miracles. The *Breviary*, to which I have so often referred in the course of the present conversations, speaks of miracles performed by the popish Saints, as if they were the most frequent occurrences within the spiritual dominions of the pope. Almost every Saint's life ends with an assurance that he performed "*innumerable* miracles." Of the trifling occasions of the pretended miracles it is impossible to give you an idea, but by relating the stories themselves. I will give you a few out of hundreds. To exalt the authority of the pope, has at all times been the purpose of all the Romish contrivances. There is a ludicrous instance of this in the life of Pope St. John, which the Roman Catholic Prayer-book gives annually on the 27th of

May. The whole Romanist clergy are informed on that day, that Pope John being on a journey to Corinth, and in want of a quiet and comfortable horse, borrowed one, which the lady of a certain nobleman used to ride. The animal carried the pope remarkably well; but when the lady attempted to use it again, she was thrown off every time she ventured upon the saddle. The Romish Prayer-book explains this with great gravity, saying, that "the horse felt indignant at having to carry a woman, after having had the vicar of Christ upon his back."

R. I imagine, Sir, that the Romanists would say, that that miracle had a very important object; such as establishing the supremacy of the pope.

A. Such evasions are indeed very common among them; but no sensible man can be at a loss to show their futility. Are not the Romanists ashamed to suppose, that when God had been silent in his Holy Scriptures concerning Rome and the pope, he would, by a kind of after-thought, make a horse become the expounder of his will? There are also a number of similar miracles told in the *Breviary*, evidently with the view of raising a great veneration for the relics which the pope keeps at Rome, in order to draw people to visit that city, and spend their money among the inhabitants, whom his bad government keeps in a state of idleness and poverty. In the bull or proclamation which has been published for the *jubilee* at Rome, in 1825, the pope invites all Christians to take a journey to his great city, where, besides the benefit of a plenary indulgence, they will have the comfort of approaching the sepulchre of St. Peter and St. Paul; who are supposed to be buried in a certain place, though no mortal being has ever seen their bodies. They may also behold the very manger in which our Saviour was laid at his birth, and all the instruments of his passion; that is to say, the cross on which he hung, the nails which fastened him to it, the lance which pierced his side, the very crown of thorns

which was upon his head; for the pope pretends to be in possession of all those relics. You are to observe, that the existence of such objects not having been heard of for more than three hundred years after the death of Christ, it was necessary to impose them on the credulity of the world by means of pretended miracles. So we are told, that the mother of the emperor Constantine having employed some men to dig in Mount Calvary, three crosses were found: and being in doubt which was the one on which our Saviour died, she applied them successively on a dead body, which came to life again when the true cross touched it. This story is made up of a set of falsehoods, which were put together successively in the course of some years. But about the true cross, supposed to have been found at Jerusalem, more than three hundred years after Christ, not a word was ever heard till after the death of Helen, and her son Constantine. We have still the works of Eusebius, a Christian bishop, who lived near Jerusalem at the time when Helen visited the Holy Land. He says a great deal about her devotion; but though he mentions the discovery (I believe it a *pretended* discovery) of the cave where the body of Jesus was laid, he does not say a word about the cross. But when, some years after, the story of the true cross was given out, and a piece of wood was shown, as being the real cross on which the Saviour died, the emperor Constantius (a bad and very superstitious man) and the men in power could stop the mouth of any one who should attempt to expose or contradict the imposture. So much for the true cross, the bits of which that are worshipped through the Catholic countries would, if collected in one place, amount to more splinters than might be taken from the main-mast of a man of war. How the nails, lance, and crown of thorns were proved to be those used at our Saviour's passion, we are not told. When people have believed in the true cross, they will easily worship the nails, and even our Sa-

viour's coat, which was kept at Constantinople before that city was taken by the Turks. These impostures were soon received as Gospel by the establishment of holidays in their honour, and by the adding a miracle now and then, when some new object of idolatry was to be palmed on the credulity of our forefathers. The *Breviary* gives a curious one to show the sanctity of another of the Roman relics. It informs us, that about the time when it became a fashion to discover every thing that had belonged to Christ and his apostles, and popes, emperors, and empresses joined to set up new relics, the pope was in possession of an iron chain, with which St. Peter had, four hundred years before, been bound at Rome. The emperor's wife, on a visit to Jerusalem, received there, as a present, another chain, which, according to the bishop of that city, had been on Peter's hands when he was liberated from prison by an angel. Having brought it to Rome, the pope took both chains in his hands, and bringing them near each other to compare them, both joined into one at a jerk, so as to appear but one piece worked by the same smith.

R. These, Sir, are more like jugglers' tricks than miracles.

A. Rome, however, has a great advantage over poor jugglers, who are closely watched by the eyes of an incredulous multitude, where every man is anxious to discover the tricks. But the pope, by nursing up every Roman Catholic in the certain belief of such stories, needs no proof or testimony, not even common caution, to palm the most monstrous miracles upon the people. What man of common sense would remain in the Church of England, if our prayer-book had it, as a most certain fact, that Westminster Abbey had been built at Paris, in France; and that, some hundred years ago, it had taken a flight to the French coast, opposite to Dover: and, having rested there for a few years, had, in a second flight, placed itself where it now stands?

R. Has the Breviary any story like this?

A. Perfectly like it. It relates that the house in which the Virgin Mary lived, in the land of Judea, was carried through the air by angels to the coast of Dalmatia, and from thence to Loretto, in the pope's dominions, where it has been worth millions to the popish clergy; such is the number of pilgrims that used to visit it, and still visit it, and the large and valuable presents which, for many centuries, have been sent by Roman Catholic princes and noblemen, to ornament it.

R. There is such falsehood on the face of that story, that I would not believe any thing in the shape of a miracle, through the same channel.

A. Yet there are Roman Catholics, who, rather than give way to the Protestants, will endanger the credit of the whole Gospel, by asserting that he who will not believe in the miracles which are reported on the authority of the Church of Rome, has no reason to receive those of the Gospel. So blind and headstrong is party-spirit! Now, if there was no other reason to reject the testimony of Rome upon these points, but that she does to this day propagate stories which she knows to be false, such as the monstrous fable of the house of Loretto, nothing else would be wanting to condemn their irreverent and unfair comparison. Besides this, consider, my friend, the difference between believing the testimony of the Apostles, whose attestations we have in writing, and giving credit to the most idle reports, of which nobody knows the origin: between believing witnesses who sealed their testimony with their blood, and trusting popes and cardinals, who are enriched by their supposed miracles, and idle monks, to whom a new saint of their order is worth more than an estate of a thousand acres: between miracles performed in the midst of incredulous and powerful enemies, and wonders brought to it by the combined influence of emperors and popes, publishing among people who, being brought up

in the most superstitious credulity, expect wonders at every turn!

R. A man must surely be blind to make the comparison!

A. The credulity, my friend, which such a prayer-book as the Breviary cannot fail to foster in the Romish Church, must make every sincere Roman Catholic an exceptionable witness on miraculous subjects. Men think they see what they wish to see: the least circumstance is turned into evidence of a miracle by credulous minds, impressed with the desire of supporting the interest of their Church, and taught by that Church that there is *piety* in implicit belief, and sin in caution and doubt. I cannot acquit the leaders of the Church of Rome of at least a connivance with a system of imposture, when I see the present pope declaring a silly monk a saint worthy of public worship; and relating, as one of his miracles, that by making the sign of the cross over two birds, which were on the table, dressed and dished, they took flight, and disappointed the company. No,—this is an old story, repeated of many saints; and those who publish it upon their own authority must know it to be false. I will not charge with the same kind of design every one of our folks who firmly believe in the miracles of prince Hohenloe. As they all relate to diseases, the least accidental change for the better produces the strongest assurance of a miracle in those who have heated their fancies in the full expectation of seeing it worked. We will not, therefore, compare their testimony with that of the apostles and first disciples, till these good Romanists shall, in large numbers, publish the resurrection of one of their friends, publicly put to death, and attest the fact with their blood. This is what the apostles and the immediate disciples of Jesus did. The Church of Rome manages the attestations of her miracles in a very different manner: she assures us that no person is declared a saint by her authority, without the performance of three remarkable miracles.

but, by an assumed air of caution, she commonly defers the trial of these miracles till some hundred years after the death of the candidate for saintship. This spirit of delusion, this determination of allowing the people to be deceived in every possible way that can attach them to the Romish communion, is most glaringly evinced in the annual jugglery performed at Naples, under the eyes of the popc. The patron saint of that town is a Saint Januarius, part of whose blood, though shed in martyrdom, as they say, (for there is no dependence on these reports, even as to the existence of some of the Roman Catholic saints,) more than fifteen hundred years ago, is still preserved in a vial. On the day of the saint's festival, the bishop, surrounded by a crowd of priests, and a multitude of lighted tapers, and clouds of the smoke of frankincense, takes the vial in his hands, where a red lump appears in an upper division. The people in crowds are kneeling in the church expecting the yearly miracle with the greatest anxiety, while the bishop handles the vial every way, till the lump begins to melt, and falls in drops into the lower part of the glass. Upon this, the bells are rung, the guns are fired, and the whole town is in a state of rapture. The trick is so gross that there is not a priest or a man of common sense at Naples, that is not convinced that the red clot is a certain composition which melts with very little heat—the heat that the hands of a priest and a crowded church will produce. Sometimes it is a longer time in being brought about, and the populace, for whom the juggle is performed, are in a state of great fear and discontent. On one of these occasions, a very excellent friend of mine, an English officer, was near the priests; but the melting being delayed, he was advised by one of them to retire, for the mob would have torn him to pieces, from a notion that the miracle was delayed on account of his being a Protestant. When the French, during the Revolutionary war, were in possession of Naples, the priests wished to raise a tumult against them, and on

the day of Saint Januarius, the blood would not melt. The mob were ready to take up arms, when the French general sent word to the archbishop, that if the miracle was not performed instantly, he would play the artillery upon his palace. This broad hint had its desired effect: the blood began to drop, and all was quiet. A Church which thus boldly tampers with the credulity of her members, and ventures upon a regular annual imposture, will assert any thing in regard to former times. Of saints who lived in early ages, she publishes the most glaring falsehoods, though every man of common learning knows that the records in which they are related are most impudent forgeries. From such documents it is, that Rome amuses her clergy with the miracles of early martyrs, who could not be burnt, though shut up within a house in flames; who would not sink, though thrown into the sea; who came unhurt out of a cauldron of boiling pitch and fat; who lived two or three days with their heads nearly cut off; and who walked three miles with their heads in their hands.

R. Monstrous; and is all that still read in the Roman Catholic prayer-book?

A. It is, day by day, the whole year through, and under heavy penalties for the omission. Were I to translate the stories of saints from the Breviary, you would imagine I was amusing you with tales of goblins and fairies. You would hear of three different saints who have sailed on their cloaks, as if on board a ship, carrying sometimes several monks with them. In that manner, we are assured by the pope, that St. Francis de Paula crossed the Strait of Sicily; St. Raymond de Pennafort, from Majorca to Barcelona; and St. Hyacinth, a large river in Poland, swollen by a flood. You would hear of a lady, St. Frances of Rome, who would stand for a long time in a river without being wet; and who used to quench her thirst with grapes produced, by miracle, in the heart of winter. You would find a St. Peter of Alcantara, who was

provided with a roof of snow, under which he might pass the night, and who made his staff grow into a fig-tree. There is scarcely a Saint who did not begin to work miracles from his birth; nay, we are told of St. Bridget, that she saved her mother from drowning, being as yet in the womb. The bells used to ring of their own accord when Saints were born, as happened with St. John *a Deo*, St. Peter Celestinus, and many others; a swarm of bees built a honey-comb in the hands of St. Ambrose, St. Peter Nolasco, St. Isidore, and several other saintly babes, while in their cradles. Another baby saint had her face changed into a rose, from which her name was given to her. These holy children often speak before they are five months old; as was the case with St. Philip Beniti, who at that age scolded his mother for not giving alms to some begging friars. All these wonders, and ten thousand others still more absurd, are asserted in the Prayer-book of the Church of Rome. I have given a copious collection of them in my *Evidence against Catholicism*, where, lest any one should suspect I was not in earnest, I have copied the original words in Latin, at the bottom of the page.

R. I cannot help thinking that though the Church of Rome is not the best school for Christian instruction, it must afford a kind of spiritual amusement (spiritual, I say, because I cannot find another word) to her followers. Her ceremonies, her miracles, her relics, must afford an agreeable variety to those who have never doubted her creed.

A. Ah, my friend, nothing can be more deceitful than the appearance of that church. There is more misery produced by her laws and institutions than I can possibly describe, though I have drunk her cup of bitterness to the dregs. In the first place, a sincere mind, which is made to depend for the hope of salvation on any thing but faith and unbounded trust in the Saviour, can never enjoy that Christian peace "which passeth all understanding." "I have known

some of the best and most conscientious Roman Catholics of whom that Church can ever boast ; my own mother and sisters were among them ; I have been Confessor not a few years, and heard the true state of mind of the most religious nuns, and such as were looked upon as living Saints by all the inhabitants of my town. From this intimate knowledge of their state, I do assure you that they are, for the greatest part, so full of doubts about their salvation, as not unfrequently to be driven to madness. In their anxiety to accumulate *merits* (for their Church teaches them that their penances and religious practices are deserving of reward in heaven) they involve themselves in a maze of external practices. Then comes the fear of sin in the very things which they undertake under the notion of pleasing God ; and as they believe that their works are to be weighed and valued in strict justice, the sincerity of their hearts cannot help discovering not only that they are nothing worth, but that sin is often mixed with their performance. In this state they are never impressed with the true scriptural doctrine, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, whenever the sinner with a lively faith receives him as his only Saviour. They are not taught that good works are the fruit of true faith ; but that they bear a true share with Christ in the work of our salvation. They are thus forced by their doctrines to look to themselves (partly at least) for the hope of heaven ; and what can be the consequence but the most agonizing fear ? With the view of heaven and hell perpetually before their eyes, and a strong belief that the obtaining the one and avoiding the other depends on the performance of a multitude of self-imposed duties, as complicated and more difficult than those of the ceremonial law of the Jews ; what can be the result but distracting anxiety ? When a Protestant is conscious that he does not make the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ a means to deceive himself and indulge his passions ; his trust in the “ full, perfect, and sufficient

sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world" which was made on the cross, removes all fear from his soul. In his progress through the stormy sea of life, he does not, as the Romanist, cling with one hand to Christ, and depend on the strength of the other to break the waves. The poor deluded pupil of the Popish school, looks (as a man always does in cases of great danger) not to the stronger, but the weaker ground of his dependence for safety. Fear, consequently, predominates in his heart. "Mind your swimming hand," say his Priests, "ply it stoutly, or Christ will allow you to sink."—"Hold fast on Him who is powerful to save," say all true Protestants, in the language of the Bible: "All that you have to do is to throw the weight of your sins and infirmities upon Christ." This is the only faith that can produce the fulness of "joy and hope in believing."

R. But are not good works necessary to salvation?

A. The truly Apostolic doctrine on that point will be best understood by looking to the direct consequence of sin. Besides, that the whole Scripture is full of loud warnings against wickedness, the Apostle expressly says: *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*¹. So that there can be no doubt, that, if we wish to be saved, we must renounce sin, or, as we are told by our Saviour, we must repent; that is, as the original word expresses it, we must *change the mind* from the pursuit of unrighteousness. By turning away from sin, and placing our full trust or faith in Christ, we are pardoned, and become justified in the sight of God. We then are made living branches of the true vine, and the spiritual life which we receive from the trunk, cannot fail to

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

produce fruit unto life eternal. Here then is the essential difference between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification. The Roman Catholic believes that his good works are, in part at least, the means of his justification, and is anxious to secure and increase it by numerous external practices, especially by self-inflicted misery: the true Protestant feels assured on the strength of Revelation, that as he turns with his whole heart, and accepts pardon through Christ's blood, his sins are pardoned without reserve. The work of justification ~~or~~ acquittal is thereby perfect: and the Spirit of Christ proceeds without delay in the subsequent work of sanctification. The Protestant has but one ground of salutary fear, lest he should wilfully and deliberately turn again from Christ to sin; but this fear is allayed by the certainty given him by the same Scripture, that God is faithful, and that it is God "who worketh in us both to will and to do, of his good pleasure¹."—The system of popish justification, I repeat to you, in the words of that truly great and calumniated man, Luther, "a plain tyranny, a racking and crucifying of consciences." He knew this from his own experience, for, like myself, he had in his youth tried it in the full sincerity of his heart. In order to secure his salvation, and following the advice of the Church of Rome, he made himself a monk, and most conscientiously kept the rule of his order; but he found, what I have frequently seen in those who bind themselves with the popish vows, that he was on the way to distraction and downright madness. "When I was a monk," he says, "I endeavoured as much as possible to live after the strait rule of my own order; I was wont to shrive (confess) myself with great devotion, and to reckon up all my sins, being always very contrite before, and I returned to confession very often, and thoroughly performed the penance that was enjoined unto me: yet

¹ Phil. ii. 13.

for all this my conscience could never be fully certified, but was always in doubt, and said this or that thou hast not done rightly : thou wast not contrite and sorrowful enough : this sin thou didst omit in thy confession, and so forth. Therefore, the more I went about to help my weak, wavering, and afflicted conscience, by men's traditions, the more weak, and doubtful, and the more afflicted I was. And thus the more I observed men's traditions, the more I transgressed them, and in seeking after righteousness, by mine order, I could never attain unto it."—To the truth of this statement I myself can bear the most ample testimony. In fact, with the exception of the persecuting spirit of the Church of Rome, I know nothing more odious and mischievous than her contrivances after the righteousness or sanctity which she recommends ; they are indeed a *plain tyranny, a racking and crucifying of the conscience.* -*

R. What contrivances do you mean ?

A. I mean the popish laws, by which, in order, as they say, to make their clergy more perfect, men are led into the most fatal snares, even to the loss of their souls, or at least to the ruin of their happiness. It is, indeed, a consequence of the Romanist doctrine of good works, that they should lay intolerable burthens on the necks of well-disposed Christians. Hence the pope has made it necessary for his clergy never to marry ; and for both men and women who, striving after the imaginary perfection of works, make themselves monks, or friars, or nuns, to make vows of never marrying, of obeying the superior of their convents, and possessing no property. They also bind themselves to keep the rule of their order, which gives forty or fifty commandments, besides those of God ; and which, by their vows, they consider as binding as if they were all in the Bible. As far as this goes, such a system would be a dangerous absurdity : for what can be more unreasonable than to endanger salvation by self-imposed duties, when we know how difficult it is for man to

keep the plain laws of God? But as the object of all these human ordinances is, that the Church of Rome may be able to make an external show of the sanctity of her unmarried priests, and the self-denial of her professed monks and nuns; the popes, fearing lest those who undertake these duties, should soon find them impracticable, and shame the Church by resuming their Christian liberty—the popes, I say, most unfeelingly, and with the greatest disregard of men's salvation, have induced all Roman Catholic governments to force clergymen, friars, and nuns, to abide by their profession; so that whoever finds himself unable to live in celibacy, or within the walls of a convent, must fly his country, under the dreadful certainty that, if taken in the attempt, he shall be punished with a cruel imprisonment during the rest of his life.

R. That is certainly a piece of tyranny which I have not sufficient words to describe.

A. You would, indeed, want words to express your feelings, if you had seen the effects of that proud and insolent despotism of the Romish Church, as I have. Indeed I am touching upon a subject of which I cannot speak without the most lively pain and indignation. When St. Paul enumerates the advantages which the unmarried Christians had in the early days of the gospel, he uses the greatest caution. "This (says the apostle) I speak for your own profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you." The Church of Rome, on the contrary, carried away by her pride, uses every art to induce young persons of either sex to bind themselves with religious vows of chastity for life. All her books of devotion, and especially her established Prayer-book, are full of the praises of virginity. She carries her absurd, not to say wicked extravagance, to the point of asserting of one of her female Saints (Saint Rose of Lima, whom I have already mentioned) that she made a vow of perpetual chastity at the age of five years. There was indeed a time when

children were bound by their parents to become monks and nuns for life; an engagement which they were forced to keep when they grew up. But now the Church of Rome allows boys and girls of sixteen to take the religious vows, and, having done so, she puts them under the guard of the Roman Catholic governments, who, frightened with the spiritual threats of the popes, employ their power and means of coercion to make them prisoners of the Church for life. It would make your very heart sick to see the nunneries in Spain. They are large houses with high walls like prisons; having small windows at a great distance from the ground, and guarded by strong and close iron bars, bristled over with long spikes. As it is the custom among Roman Catholics to send most of their little girls to be educated by the nuns, the poor innocents become attached to their teachers, who are besides exceedingly anxious to gain recruits to their order. The girls are petted till they come of age to take the vows. The priests, who, being not allowed to marry, feel a strong jealousy of those who take a young and amiable wife, are always ready to advise their young penitents to take the veil. In this manner a great number of unsuspecting girls are yearly entrapped in the Roman Catholic Church. Even in England nunneries have been on the increase of late years. Some of these poor prisoners continue in their slavery without reluctance; many feel unhappy, but submit from the shame of changing their minds, and because, even in this country, where the Protestant law would protect their leaving the convent, their relations would look upon them as reprobates, and their priests would harass them to death. In Roman Catholic countries, the hopelessness of their case obliges many to bear their unhappy lot patiently. But some are driven to desperation, and I have known instances which prove that the pope is a more unfeeling tyrant than any slave-master in Algiers.

R. Have you really seen a poor female dying for liberty, and yet kept like a criminal in bondage?

A. I have known many; but there was one among those unhappy victims, whose sufferings harrow my mind and heart whenever they come to my recollection. You must, however, be made acquainted with her melancholy story; but to save myself the pain of telling it anew, let me read it out of my *Evidence against Catholicism*:

"The eldest daughter of a family intimately acquainted with mine, was brought up in the convent of St. Agnes at Seville, under the care of her mother's sister, the abbess of that female community. The circumstances of the whole transaction were so public at Seville, and the subsequent judicial proceedings have given them such notoriety, that I do not feel bound to conceal names. *Maria Francisca Barreiro*, the unfortunate subject of this account, grew up, a lively and interesting girl, in the convent; while the younger sister enjoyed the advantages of an education at home. The mother formed an early design of devoting her eldest daughter to religion, in order to give her less attractive favourite a better chance of getting a husband. The distant and harsh manner with which she constantly treated *Maria Francisca*, attached the unhappy girl to her aunt by the ties of the most ardent affection. The time, however, arrived, when it was necessary that she should either leave her, and endure the consequences of her mother's aversion at home, or take the vows, and thus close the gates of the convent upon herself for ever. She preferred the latter course, and came out to pay the last visit to her friends. I met her, almost daily, at the house of one of her relations; where her words and manner soon convinced me that she was a victim of her mother's designing and unfeeling disposition. The father was an excellent man, though timid and undecided. He feared his wife, and was in awe of the monks, who, as usual, were extremely anxious to increase the number of

their female prisoners. Though I was aware of the danger which a man incurs, in Spain, who tries to dissuade a young woman from being a nun, humanity impelled me to speak seriously to the father, entreating him not to expose a beloved child to spend her life in hopeless regret for lost liberty. He was greatly moved by my reasons; but the impression I made was soon obliterated. The day for Maria Francisca's taking the veil was at length fixed; and though I had a most pressing invitation to be present at the ceremony, I determined not to see the wretched victim at the altar. On the preceding day I was called from my stall at the Royal Chapel to the confessional. A lady, quite covered by her black veil, was kneeling at the grate through which females speak to the confessor. As soon as I took my seat, the well-known voice of Maria Francisca made me start with surprise. Bathed in tears, and scarcely able to speak without betraying her state to the people who knelt near the confessional box, by the sobs which interrupted her words, she told me she wished only to unburden her heart to me, before she shut herself up for life. Assistance, she assured me, she would not receive; for rather than live with her mother, and endure the obloquy to which her swerving from her announced determination would expose her, 'she would risk the salvation of her soul.' All my remonstrances were in vain. I offered to obtain the protection of the archbishop, and thereby to extricate her from the difficulties in which she was involved. She declined my offer, and appeared as resolute as she was wretched. The next morning she took the veil; and professed at the end of the following year. Her good aunt died soon after; and the nuns, who had allured her into the convent by their caresses, when they perceived that she was not able to disguise her misery, and feared that the existence of a reluctant nun might by her means transpire, became her daily tormentors.

After an absence of three years from Seville, I

found that Maria Francisca had openly declared her aversion to a state, from which nothing but death could save her. She often changed her confessors, expecting comfort from their advice. At last she found a friend in one of the companions of my youth; a man whose benevolence surpasses even the bright genius with which nature has gifted him: though neither has been able to exempt him from the evils to which Spaniards seem to be fated in proportion to their worth. He became her confessor, and in that capacity spoke to her daily. But what could he do against the inflexible tyranny in whose grasp she languished?

“ About this time the approach of Napoleon’s army threw the town into a general consternation, and the convents were opened to such of the nuns as wished to fly. Maria Francisca, whose parents were absent, put herself under the protection of a young prebendary of the cathedral, and by his means reached Cadiz, where I saw her, on my way to England. I shall never forget the anguish with which, after a long conversation, wherein she disclosed to me the whole extent of her wretchedness, she exclaimed *There is no hope for me!* and fell into convulsions.

“ The liberty of Spain from the French invaders was the signal for the fresh confinement of this helpless young woman to her former prison. Here she attempted to put an end to her sufferings by throwing herself into a deep well; but was taken out alive. Her mother was now dead, and her friends instituted a suit of *nullity of profession* before the ecclesiastical court. But the laws of the council of Trent were positive; and she was cast in the trial. Her despair, however, exhausted the little strength which her protracted sufferings had left her, and the unhappy Maria Francisca died soon after, having scarcely reached her twenty-fifth year.”

E. Sir, the history of your unfortunate friend is so horrible, that I wonder how whole nations can conspire to support a tyranny wicked enough to sacrifice

not only the body but the soul of the helpless creatures who fall into its snares. I know that God is infinitely merciful: but does it not strike you that the pope and his Church, provided they keep their slaves, do not care if they are driven to suicide, and all the sins which follow and attend despair?

A. I know that the pope and his advisers are perfectly indifferent about moral evils which arise from the laws which keep up the appearance of infallibility in their Church. Rather than alter her law of celibacy, Rome has allowed her clergy to be for many ages exposed to the most fatal temptations; and for the most part to be involved in the guilt of many a secret, and many an open sin, which might be avoided by the repeal of that law.

R. Does not the pope ever dispense with the law of celibacy?

A. Rome, my friend, never draws back but when fear compels her. The only dispensation I ever heard of was obtained by Bonaparte for Talleyrand, a French bishop. The whole history of papal Rome proves that nothing but absolute compulsion will ever make her change her conduct.

R. Has the pope ceased to maintain what I have heard you call the *Inquisition*?

A. The pope has an *Inquisition* at Rome; a court of law, whose business it is to prevent the propagation of opinions which do not agree with the doctrines of Rome. In this court the judges are priests. The prisoners are taken up upon suspicion, are kept without communication, and sentenced without being told who are the witnesses against them. Under the authority of the pope, the *Inquisition* of Spain put to death by fire thirty-one thousand nine hundred and twelve persons, in the course of its existence. The Spanish *Inquisition* has lately been abolished; but the law which condemns to death any Spaniard who does not receive all the articles of the pope's faith, is still in rigour, and may be called into action by any of the

Spanish bishops, each of whom is now *inquisitor* in his diocese.

R. Do you think that Roman Catholics are bound in conscience to approve such laws?

A. My knowledge of the Church of Rome, and of Spain, where the doctrines and spiritual government of that Church have prevailed for many centuries, thoroughly convince me that *religious persecution* is a direct consequence of the principles which the pope still maintains. But I begin to hope, that, as there are Protestants who, in spite of the *principles* of the Reformation, would persecute for religious dissent from their Church or sect, so there may be sincere Roman Catholics, who, guided by the spirit of the Gospel, feel anxious to remove from their Church the disgrace of her barbarous laws against heretics. The spirit of religious persecution is only human pride disguised under the appearance of zeal for divine truth. Whoever does not allow that other men have as much right as himself to declare their opinions upon religious subjects, will persecute as soon as he has the power. And remember, I pray, that religious persecution does not consist in the severity or cruelty of the punishment for religious dissent: the least molestation on that account is persecution, since it is depriving another man of those *rights of conscience*, to which all are equally entitled.

R. I have heard, Sir, that you were afraid of the admission of Roman Catholics to parliament.

A. So I was, indeed; and considering the sad experience which I have of Roman Catholic intolerance, my fears might (I conceive) be easily excused. I stated what I knew upon the subject of papal intolerance, only with a view that the legislature should not decide on the grounds of any false or disguised evidence. But no sooner was the decision made, than I did every thing in my power (though that is small indeed) to assist the measure in its intended effects of union and reconciliation. No sacrifice on my part would appear

to me too great, if by its means I could contribute to the extinction of religious bigotry, which still injures the best interests of Christianity. May Heaven hasten the day when Christians of all denominations shall be distinguished by the mark which our divine Master appointed: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another¹!"

R. Amen.

¹ John xiii. 35.

THE END.

A
MORAL DEMONSTRATION,

SHEWING THAT
THE RELIGION OF JESUS CHRIST
IS FROM GOD.

BY
JERIMY TAYLOR, D.D.
LATE LORD BISHOP OF ELY AND CONNOR.



NEW EDITION.

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"No tract ever came from the pen of man, better calculated to dispel those doubts and difficulties which may arise in the mind of a believer, or to work conviction and conversion in that of an unbeliever, who can bring himself to give it a fair and attentive perusal. This last ever appeared to me to be its true character, since the hour when, with equal surprise and pleasure, I first met with it."

BISHOP HORNE.

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MORAL DEMONSTRATION,

&c. &c.

THIS discourse, of all the disputables in the world, shall require the fewest things to be granted; even nothing but what was evident, even nothing but the very subject of the question, namely, That there was such a man as Jesus Christ; that He pretended such things, and taught such doctrines. For he that will prove these things to be from God, must be allowed that they were from something or other. But this postulate I do not ask for need, but for order's sake and art. For what the histories of that age reported as a public affair, as one of the most eminent transactions of the world; that which made so much noise, which caused so many changes, which occasioned so many wars, which divided so many hearts, which altered so many families, which procured so many deaths, which obtained so many laws in favour, and suffered so many rescripts in the disfavour, of itself; that which was not done in a corner, but was thirty-

three years and more in acting; which caused so many sects, and was opposed by so much art, and so much power, that it might not grow; which filled the world with noise; which effected such great changes in the bodies of men, by curing the diseased, and smiting the contumacious or the hypocrites; which drew so many eyes, and filled so many tongues, and employed so many pens, and was the care and the question of the whole world at that time, and immediately after; that which was consigned by public acts and records of courts, which was in the books of friends and enemies, which came accompanied and remarked with eclipses, and stars, and prodigies of heaven and earth; that which the Jews, even in spite, and against their wills, confessed, and which the witty adversaries intending to overthrow, could never so much as challenge of want of truth in the matter of fact and story; that which they who are infinitely concerned that it should not be believed, or more, that it had never been, do yet only labour to make to appear not to have been divine:—certainly, this thing is so certain that it was, that the defenders of it need not account it a kindness to have it presupposed.

For never was any story in the world, that had so many degrees of credibility, as the story of the person, life, and death of Jesus Christ. And if He had not been a true Prophet, yet that He was in the world, and said and did such things, cannot be denied. For even concerning Mahomet, we make no question but he was in the world, and led a great part of mankind

after him. And what was less proved we infinitely believe. And what all men say, and no man denies, and was notorious in itself, of this we may make further inquiries, whether it was all that which it pretended. For that it did make pretences, and was in the world, needs no more probation.

The Person of Jesus Christ.

BUT now whether Jesus Christ was sent from God, and delivered the will of God, we are to take accounts from all the things of the world which were on him, or about him, or from him. Consider first his person. He was foretold by all the Prophets. He, I say; for that appears by the event, and the correspondences of their sayings to his person;—He was described by infallible characteristics which did fit him, and did never fit any but him. For when He was born, then was the fulness of time, and the Messiah was expected at the time when Jesus did appear. Which gave occasion to many of the godly then to wait for him, and to hope to live till the time of his revelation. And they did so; and with a spirit of prophecy which their own nation did confess and honour, glorified God at the revelation. And the most excellent and devout persons that were conspicuous for their piety, did then rejoice in him, and confess him. And the expectation of him at that time was so public and famous, that it gave occasion to divers impostors to abuse

the credulity of the people in pretending to be the Messias.

But not only the predictions of the time, and the perfect synchronisms, did point him out, but at his birth a strange star appeared, which guided certain Levantine princes and sages to the inquiry after him; a strange star, which had an irregular place and an irregular motion, that came by design, and acted by counsel, the counsel of the Almighty Guide. It moved from place to place, till it stood just over the house where the babe did sleep;—a star of which the heathen knew much, who knew nothing of him; a star which Chalcidius affirmed to have signified the descent of God for the salvation of man; a star that guided the wise Chaldees to worship him with gifts, as the same disciple of Plato does affirm, and, as the Holy Scriptures deliver; and this star could be no secret. It troubled all the country. It put Herod upon strange arts of security for his kingdom. It effected a sad tragedy accidentally; for it occasioned the death of all the little babes in the city, and vicinage of Bethlehem.

But the birth of this young child, which was thus glorified by a star, was also signified by an angel, and was effected by the Holy Spirit of God, in a manner which was in itself supernatural. A Virgin was his Mother, and God was his Father, and his beginning was miraculous. And this matter of his birth of a Virgin was proved to an interested and jealous person, ~~he~~ to Joseph, the supposed father of Jesus. It was

affirmed publicly by all his family, and by all his disciples; and published in the midst of all his enemies, who by no artifice could reprove it;—a matter so famous, that when it was urged as an argument to prove Jesus to be the Messiah, by the force of a prophecy in Isaiah, “A virgin shall conceive a Son,” they who obstinately refused to admit him, did not deny the matter of fact; but denied that it was so meant by the Prophet. Which, if it were true, can only prove that Jesus was more excellent than was foretold by the Prophets, but that there was nothing less in him than was to be in the Messiah. It was a matter so famous, that the Arabian physicians, who can affirm no such things of their Mahomet, and yet not being able to deny it to be true of the Holy Jesus, endeavour to alleviate and lessen the thing, by saying, it is not wholly beyond the force of nature, that a virgin should conceive. So that it was on all hands undeniable, that the mother of Jesus was a Virgin Mother.

This is that Jesus, at whose presence before he was born, a babe in his mother’s womb also did leap for joy; who was also a person extraordinary himself, conceived in his mother’s old age, after a long barrenness; signified by an angel in the Temple, to his father, officiating his priestly office, who was also struck dumb for his not present believing. All the people saw it, and all his kindred were witnesses of his restitution. And he was named by the angel, and his office declared to be the forerunner of the Holy

Jesus. And this also was foretold by one of the old Prophets. For the whole story of this Divine person is a chain of providence and wonder, every link of which is a verification of prophecy; and all of it is that thing which from Adam to the birth of Jesus was pointed at and hinted by all the Prophets, whose words in him passed perfectly into the event.

This is that Jesus, who as He was born without a father, so He was learned without a master. He was a man without age, a doctor in a child's garment, disputing in the sanctuary at twelve years old. He was a sojourner in Egypt, because the poor Babe, born of an indigent mother, was a formidable rival to a potent king. And this fear could not come from the design of the infant; but must needs arise from the illustriousness of the birth, and the prophecies of the child, and the sayings of the learned, and the journey of the wise men, and the decrees of God. This journey, and the return, were both managed by the conduct of an angel and a divine dream: for to the Son of God all the angels did rejoice to minister.

This blessed Person, made thus excellent by his Father, and glorious by miraculous consignations, and illustrious by the ministry of heavenly spirits, and proclaimed to Mary and to Joseph by two angels, to the shepherds by a multitude of the heavenly host, to the wise men by a prophecy and by a star, to the Jews by the shepherds, to the Gentiles by the three wise men, to Herod by the doctors of the law, and to himself perfectly known by the increasing his human

nature in the bosom and heart of God, and by the fulness of the Spirit of God, was yet pleased for thirty years together to live an humble and a laborious, a chaste and a devout, a regular and an even, a wise and an exemplar, a pious and an obscure, life; without complaint, without sin, without design of fame, or grandeur of spirit:—till the time came that the clefts of the rock were to open, and the diamond give its lustre, and be worn in the diadems of kings.

Testimony to Christ.

AND then this person was wholly admirable. For He was ushered into the world by the voice of a loud crier in the wilderness, a person austere and wise, of a strange life, full of holiness and full of hardness, and a great preacher of righteousness: a man believed by all the people that he came from God; one who, in his own nation, gathered disciples publicly, and—which amongst them was a great matter—he was the doctor of a new institution, and baptized all the country. Yet this man, so great, so revered, so followed, so listened to by king and people, by doctors and by idiots, by Pharisees and Sadducees; this man preached Jesus to the people, pointed out the Lamb of God, told that He must increase, and himself from all that fame must retire, to give him place. He received him to baptism, after having with duty and modesty declared his own unworthiness to give, but rather a

worthiness to receive baptism from the holy hands of Jesus.

But at the solemnity God sent down the Holy Spirit upon his holy Son, and by a voice from heaven, a voice of thunder, and God was in that voice, declared that this was his Son, and that He was delighted in Him. This voice from heaven was such, so evident, so certain a conviction of what it did intend to prove, so known and accepted as the way of Divine revelation under the second temple, that at that time every man that desired a sign honestly, would have been satisfied with such a voice, it being the testimony by which God made all extraordinaries to be credible to his people, from the days of Ezra, to the death of the nation. And that there was such a voice, not only then, but divers times after, was as certain, and made as evident, as things of that nature can ordinarily be made. For it being a matter of fact, cannot be supposed infinite, but limited to time and place, heard by a certain number of persons, and was as a clap of thunder upon ordinary accounts; which could be heard but by those who were within the sphere of its own activity; and reported by those to others, who are to give testimony as testimonies are required, which are credible under the test of two or three disinterested, honest, and true men. And though this was done in the presence of more, and oftener than once, yet it was a Divine testimony but at first, but is to be conveyed by the means of men. And as God thundered from heaven at the giving of the Law,

though that He did so, we have notice only from the books of Moses, received from the Jewish nation ; so He did in the days of the Baptist, and so He did to Peter, James, and John ; and so He did in the presence of the Pharisees, and many of the common people. And as it is not to be supposed that all these would join their divided interests, for and against themselves, for the verification of a lie ; so if they would have done it, they could not have done it without reproof of their own parties, who would have been glad by the discovery only to disgrace the whole story.

But if the report of honest and just men so reputed, may be questioned for matter of fact, or may not be accounted sufficient to make faith when there is no pretence of men to the contrary, besides that we can have no story transmitted to us, nor records kept, no acts of courts, no narratives of the days of old, no traditions of our fathers ; so there could not be left in nature any usual instrument whereby God could, after the manner of men, declare his own will to us. But either we should never know the will of heaven upon earth, or it must be that God must not only tell it once, but always ; and not only always to some men, but always to all men. And then, as there would be no use in history, or the honesty of men, and their faithfulness in telling any act of God in declaration of his will, so there would be perpetual necessity of miracles. And we could not serve God directly with our understanding, for there would be no such thing

as faith, that is, of assent without conviction of understanding. And we could not please God with believing, because there would be in it nothing of the will, nothing of love and choice. And that faith which is, would be like that of Thomas, to believe what we see or hear. And God should not at all govern upon earth, unless He did continually come himself. For thus, all government, all teachers, all apostles, all messengers, would be needless, because they could not show to the eye what they told to the ears of men. And it might as well be disbelieved in all courts and by all princes, that this was not the letter of a prince, or the act of a man, or the writing of his hand. And so all human intercourse must cease, and all senses but the eye be useless as to this affair, or else to the ear all voices must be strangers but the principal,—if, I say, no reports shall make faith.

But it is certain, that when these voices were sent from heaven, and heard upon earth, they prevailed amongst many that heard them not; and disciples were multiplied upon such accounts. Or else it must be that none that did hear them could be believed by any of their friends and neighbours. For if they were, the voice was as effective at the reflex and rebound, as in the direct emission; and could prevail with them that believed their brother or their friend, as certainly as with them that believed their own ears and eyes.

The Miracles He wrought.

I NEED not speak of the vast numbers of miracles which He wrought; miracles which were not more demonstrations of his power than of his mercy. For they had nothing of pompousness and ostentation, but infinitely of charity and mercy; and that permanent, and lasting, and often. He opened the eyes of the blind; He made the crooked straight; He made the weak strong. He cured fevers with the touch of his hand, and an issue of blood with the hem of his garment, and sore eyes with the spittle of his mouth and the clay of the earth. He multiplied the loaves and fishes; He raised the dead to life, a young maiden, the widow's son of Nain, and Lazarus; and cast out devils by the word of his mouth;—which He could never do but by the power of God.

For Satan does not cast out Satan, nor a house fight against itself, if it means to stand long. And the devil could not help Jesus, because the holy Jesus taught men virtue, called them from the worshipping devils, taught them to resist the devil, to lay aside all those abominable idolatries by which the devil doth rule in the hearts of men. He taught men to love God, to fly from temptations to sin, to hate and avoid all those things of which the devil is guilty. For Christianity forbids pride, envy, malice, lying; and yet affirms that the devil is proud, envious, malicious, and the father of lies. And, therefore, wherever Christianity pre-

vails, the devil is not worshipped. And, therefore, he that can think that a man without the power of God could overturn the devil's principles, cross his designs, weaken his strengths, baffle him in his policies, befool him and turn him out of possession, and make him open his own mouth against himself as he did often, and confess himself conquered by Jesus and tormented, as the oracle did to Augustus Cæsar, and the devil to Jesus himself: he, I say, that thinks a mere man can do this, knows not the weaknesses of a man, nor the power of an angel.

But he that thinks this could be done by compact, and by consent of the devil, must think him to be an intelligence without understanding, a power without force, a fool and a sot to assist a power against himself, and to persecute the power he did assist, to stir up the world to destroy the Christians, whose Master and Lord he did assist to destroy himself. And when we read that Porphyrius, an heathen, a professed enemy to Christianity, did say, that since Jesus was worshipped, the gods could help no man; that is, the gods which they worshipped, the poor baffled enervated dæmons; he must either think that the devils are as foolish as they are weak, or else that they did nothing towards this declination of their power; and, therefore, that they suffer it by a power higher than themselves; that is, by the power of God in the hand of Jesus

The Life of Jesus.

BUT besides that God gave testimony from heaven concerning him, He also gave this testimony of himself to have come from God, because that He did God's will. For he that is a good man, and lives by the laws of God, and of his nation, a life innocent and simple, prudent and wise, holy and spotless, unreproved and unsuspected, he is certainly by all wise men said in a good sense to be the Son of God. But he who does well, and speaks well, and calls all men to glorify and serve God, and serves no ends but of holiness and charity, of wisdom of hearts and reformation of manners, this man carries great authority in his sayings, and ought to prevail with good men in good things, for good ends; which is all that is here required. But his nature was so sweet, his manners so humble, his words so wise and composed, his comportment so grave and winning, his answer so seasonable, his questions so deep, his reproof so severe and charitable, his pity so great and merciful, his preachings so full of reason and holiness, of weight and authority, his conversation so useful and beneficent, his poverty great but his alms frequent, his family so holy and religious, his and their employment so profitable, his meekness so incomparable, his passions without difference—save only where zeal or pity carried him on to worthy and apt expressions!

A person that never laughed, but often wept in a

sense of the calamities of others. He loved every man and hated no man. He gave counsel to the doubtful, and instructed the ignorant. He bound up the broken hearts, and strengthened the feeble knees. He relieved the poor, and converted the sinners. He despised none that came to him for relief, and as for those that did not, He went to them. He took all occasions of mercy that were offered him, and went abroad for more. He spent his days in preaching and healing, and his nights in prayers and conversation with God. He was obedient to laws, and subject to princes, though He was the prince of Judea in right of his mother, and of all the world in right of his Father. The people followed him, but He made no conventions; and when they were made, He suffered no tumults. When they would have made him a king. He withdrew himself. When He knew they would put him to death, He offered himself. He knew men's hearts, and conversed secretly, and gave answer to their thoughts, and prevented their questions. He would work a miracle rather than give offence, and yet suffer every offence rather than see God his Father dishonoured. He exactly kept the law of Moses, to which He came to put a period, and yet chose to signify his purpose only by doing acts of mercy upon their Sabbath; doing nothing which they should call a breach of a commandment, but healing sick people; a charity which themselves would do to beasts, and yet they were angry at him for doing it to their brethren.

In all his life, and in all his conversation with his

nation, He was innocent as an angel of light. And when by the greatness of his worth, and the severity of his doctrine, and the charity of his miracles, and the noises of the people, and his immense fame in all that part of the world, and the multitude of his disciples, and the authority of his sermons, and his free reproof of their hypocrisy, and his discovery of their false doctrines and weak traditions, He had branded the reputation of the vicious rulers of the people, and they resolved to put him to death; they who had the biggest malice in the world, and the weakest accusations, were forced to supply their want of articles against him by making truth to be his fault, and his office to be his crime, and his open confession of what was asked him to be his article of condemnation. And yet, after all this, they could not persuade the competent judge to condemn him, or to find him guilty of any fault. And therefore they were forced to threaten him with Cæsar's name; against whom, then, they would pretend him to be an enemy, though in their charge they neither proved, nor indeed, laid it against him. And yet to whatsoever they objected, He made no return. But his silence and his innocence were remarkable and evident, without labour and reply; and needed no more argument than the sun needs an advocate to prove that he is the brightest star in the firmament.

His Death.

WELL, so it was, they crucified him. And when they did, they did as much put out the eye of heaven as destroy the Son of God. For when with an incomparable sweetness, and a patience exemplar to all ages of sufferers, He endured affronts, examinations, scorns, insolences of rude, ungentle tradesmen, cruel whippings, injurious, unjust, and unreasonable usages, from those whom He obliged by all the arts of endearment, and offers of the biggest kindness; at last He went to death as to the work which God appointed him, that He might become the world's sacrifice, and the great example of holiness, and the instance of representing by what way the world was to be made happy, even by sufferings, and so entering into heaven; that He might, I say, become the Saviour of his enemies, and the elder brother to his friends, and the Lord of glory, and the fountain of its emanation.

Then it was that God gave new testimonies from heaven. The sun was eclipsed all the while He was upon the cross, and yet the moon was in the full; that is, he lost his light, not because any thing in nature did invest him, but because the God of nature, as a heathen at that very time confessed who yet saw nothing of this sad iniquity, did suffer. The rocks did rend, the veil of the temple divided of itself, and opened the inclosures, and disparked the sanctuary, and made it pervious to the Gentile's eye. The dead

arose, and appeared in Jerusalem to their friends. The centurion and divers of the people smote their hearts, and were by those strange indications convinced that He was the Son of God. His garments were parted, and lots cast upon his inward coat. They gave him vinegar and gall to drink. They brake not a bone of him, but they pierced his side with a spear, looking upon him whom they had pierced; according to the prophecies of him, which were so clear, and descended to minutes and circumstances of his passion, that there was nothing left by which they could doubt whether this were He or no, who was to come into the world.

But after all this, that all might be finally verified, and no scruple left, after three days' burial, a great stone being rolled to the face of the grave, and the stone sealed, and a guard of soldiers placed about it, He arose from the grave, and for forty days together conversed with his followers and disciples; and beyond all suspicion was seen of five hundred brethren at once: which is a number too great to give their consent and testimony to a lie. And it being so publicly and confidently affirmed at the very time it was done, and for ever after urged by all Christians, used as the most mighty demonstration, proclaimed, preached, talked of, even upbraided to the gainsayers, affirmed by eye-witnesses, persuaded to the kindred and friends, and the relatives and companions, of all those five hundred persons who were eye-witnesses, it is infinitely removed from a reasonable suspicion;—and at the end of those days was taken up into heaven in the sight

of many of them, as Elias was in the presence of Elisha.

Proof of these things.

Now He of whom all these things are true, must needs be more than a mere man. And that they were true, was affirmed by many very eye-witnesses; men who were innocent, plain men; men that had no bad ends to serve; men that looked for no preferment by the thing in this life; men to whom their Master told they were to expect not crowns and sceptres, not praise of men or wealthy possessions, not power and ease, but a voluntary casting away care and attendance upon secular affairs; that they might attend their ministry, poverty and prisons, trouble and vexation, persecution and labour, whippings and banishment, bonds and death; and for a reward they must stay till a good day came: but that was not to be at all in this world. And when the day of restitution and recompense should come, they should never know till it came. But upon the hope of this, and the faith of Jesus, and the Word of God, so taught, so consigned, they must rely wholly and for ever.

Now let it be considered, how could matters of fact be proved better? and how could this be any thing, but such as to rely upon matters of fact? What greater certainty can we have of any thing that was ever done which we saw not or heard not, but by the report of wise and honest persons? Especially since they were

such whose life and breeding was so far from ambition and pompousness, that as they could not naturally and reasonably hope for any great number of proselytes, so the fame that could be hoped for amongst them, as it must be a matter of their own procuring, and consequently, uncertain, so it must needs be very inconsiderable; not fit to outweigh the danger and the loss, nor yet at all valuable by them whose education and pretences were against it. These we have plentifully. But if these men are numerous and united, it is more. Then we have more; for so many did affirm these things which they saw and heard, that thousands of people were convinced of the truth of them. But then, if these men offer their oath, it is yet more; but not yet so much as we have, for they sealed those things with their blood; they gave their life for a testimony. And what reward can any man expect, if he gives his life for a lie? Who shall make him recompense? Or what can tempt him to do it knowingly?

But after all, it is to be remembered, that as God hates lying, so He hates incredulity. As we must not believe a lie, so neither stop up our ears and eyes against truth. And what we do every minute of our lives in matters of little and of great concernment, if we refuse to do in our religion, which yet is to be conducted as other human affairs are, by human instruments and arguments of persuasion, proper to the nature of the thing; it is an obstinacy, that is as contrary to human reason as it is to divine faith.

These things relate to the person of the holy Jesus,

and prove sufficiently that it was extraordinary, that it was divine, that God was with him, that his power wrought in him; and, therefore, that it was his will which Jesus taught, and God signed.

The Doctrine of Jesus.

BUT then, if nothing of all this had been, yet even the doctrine itself proves itself divine, and to come from God. For it is a doctrine perfective of human nature, that teaches us to love God and to love one another; to hurt no man, and to do good to every man. It propines to us the noblest, the highest, and the bravest pleasures of the world; the joys of charity, the rest of innocence, the peace of quiet spirits, the wealth of beneficence; and forbids us only to be beasts and to be devils. It allows all that God and nature intended, and only restrains the excrescences of nature, and forbids us to take pleasure in that which is the only entertainment of devils, in murders and revenges, malice, and spiteful words and actions. It permits corporal pleasures where they can best minister to health and societies, to conversation of families, and honour of communities. It teaches men to keep their words, that themselves may be secured in all their just interests, and to do good to others, that good may be done to them. It forbids biting one another, that we may not be devoured by one another; and commands obedience to superiors, that we may not be ruined in confusion. It combines governments, and confirms all good laws,

and makes peace, and opposes and prevents wars where they are not just, and where they are not necessary,

It is a religion that is life and spirit, not consisting in ceremonies and external amusements, but in the services of the heart, and the real fruit of the lips and hands ; that is, of good words and good deeds. It bids us to do that to God which is agreeable to his excellences ; that is, worship him with the best things we have, and make all things else minister to it. It bids us to do that to our neighbour by which he may be better. It is the perfection of the natural law, and agreeable to our natural necessities, and promotes our natural ends and designs. It does not destroy reason, but instructs it in very many things, and complies with it in all. It hath in it both heat and light, and is not more effectual than it is beauteous. It promises every thing that we can desire, and yet promises nothing but what it does effect. It proclaims war against all vices, and generally does command every virtue. It teaches us with ease to mortify those affections which reason durst scarce reprove, because she hath not strength enough to conquer ; and it does create in us those virtues which reason of herself never knew, and after they are known could never approve sufficiently. It is a doctrine in which nothing is superfluous or burdensome ; nor yet is there any thing wanting which can procure happiness to mankind, or by which God can be glorified. And if wisdom, and mercy, and justice, and simplicity, and holiness, and purity, and meekness, and contentedness, and charity, be images

of God and rays of divinity, then that doctrine in which all these shine so gloriously, and in which nothing else is ingredient, must needs be from God. And that all this is true in the doctrine of Jesus, needs no other probation but the reading the words.

The Gospels.

For that the words of Jesus are contained in the Gospels; that is, in the writings of them who were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the actions and sermons of Jesus, is not at all to be doubted. For in every sect we believe their own records of doctrines and institution. For it is madness to suppose the Christians to pretend to be servants of the laws of Jesus, and yet to make a law of their own which He made not. No man doubts but that the Alcoran is the law of Mahomet; that the Old Testament contains the religion of the Jews. And the authority of these books is proved by all the arguments of the religion. For all the arguments persuading to the religion are intended to prove no other than is contained in those books. And these having been for fifteen hundred years and more, received absolutely by all Christian assemblies; if any man shall offer to make a question of their authority, he must declare his reasons.

For the disciples of the religion have sufficient presumption, security and possession, till they can be reasonably disturbed. But that now they can never be so is infinitely certain, because we have a long,

immemorial, universal tradition, that these books were written in those times, by those men whose names they bear. They were accepted by all Churches at the very first notice; except some few of the latter, which were first received by some Churches, and then consented to by all. They were acknowledged by the same, and by the next age for genuine: their authority published, their words cited, appeals made to them in all questions of religion; because it was known and confessed that they wrote nothing but that they knew, so that they were not deceived. And to say they would lie, must be made to appear by something extrinsical to this enquiry, and was never so much as plausibly pretended by any adversaries; and it being a matter of another man's will, must be declared by actions, or not at all.

But besides, the men that wrote them were to be believed because they did miracles. They wrote prophecies, which are verified by the event. Persons were cured at their sepulchres; a thing so famous, that it was confessed even by the enemies of the religion. And after all, that which the world ought to rely upon, is the wisdom, and the providence, and the goodness of God; all which is concerned to take care that the religion, which himself so adorned and proved by miracles and mighty signs, should not be lost, nor any false writings be obtruded instead of true; lest without our fault the will of God become impossible to be obeyed.

But to return to the thing. All those excellent things which singly did make famous so many sects of

philosophers, and remarked so many princes of their sects, all of them united, and many more which their eyes, dark and dim, could not see, are heaped together in this system of wisdom and holiness. Here are plain precepts full of deepest mystery. Here are the measures of holiness and approaches to God described; obedience and conformity; mortification of the body, and elevation of the spirit; abstractions from earth and arts of society, and union with heaven; degrees of excellences, and tendencies to perfection; imitations of God, and conversations with him. These are the heights and descents, upon the plain grounds of natural reason, and natural religion. For there is nothing commanded but what our reason, by nature, ought to choose; and yet nothing of natural reason taught, but what is heightened and made more perfect by the Spirit of God. And when there is any thing in the religion that is against flesh and blood, it is only when flesh and blood is against us, and against reason; when flesh and blood either would hinder us from great felicity, or bring us into great misery. To conclude; it is such a law, that nothing can hinder men to receive and entertain, but a pertinacious baseness and love to vice; and none can receive it but those who resolve to be good and excellent. And if the holy Jesus had come into the world with less splendour of power and mighty demonstrations, yet even the excellency of what He taught makes him alone fit to be the Master of the world.

Their Design.

BUT then let us consider what this excellent Person did effect, and with what instruments He brought so great things to pass. He was to put a period to the rites of Moses, and the religion of the temple, of which the Jews were zealous even unto pertinacy; to reform the manners of all mankind; to confound the wisdom of the Greeks; to break in pieces the power of the devil; to destroy the worship of all false gods; to pull down their oracles, and change their laws; and by principles wise and holy, to reform the false discourses of the world.

But see what was to be taught,—a Trinity in the Unity of the Godhead. “That is the Christian arithmetic; three are one, and one are three;” so Lucian, in his *Philopatris*, or some other, derides the Christian doctrine. See their philosophy, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. No: *Ex nihilo omnia*, all things are made of nothing; and a man-God and a God-man, the same person, finite and infinite, born in time, and yet from all eternity the Son of God; but yet born of a woman, and she a virgin, but yet a mother. Resurrection of the dead, re-union of soul and body; this was part of the Christian physics, or their natural philosophy. But then, certainly, their moral was easy and delicious. It is so indeed; but not to flesh and blood, whose appetites it pretends to regulate or to destroy; to restrain, or else to mortify; fasting, and penance, and humility, loving our enemies, restitution of injuries, and self-

denial, and taking up the cross, and losing all our goods, and giving our life for Jesus. As the other was hard to believe, so this is as hard to do.

But for whom, and under whose conduct was all this to be believed, and all this to be done, and all this to be suffered? Surely for some glorious and mighty prince, whose splendour as far outshines the Roman empire, as the jewels of Cleopatra outshined the swaddling clothes of the Babe at Bethlehem. No, it was not so neither. For all this was for Jesus, whom his followers preached; a poor babe, born in a stable, the son of a carpenter, cradled in a cratch, swaddled in poor clouts. It was for him whom they indeed called a God, but yet whom all the world knew, and they themselves said, was whipped at a post, nailed to a cross. He fell under the malice of the Jews, his countrymen, and the power of his Roman lords, a cheap and a pitiful sacrifice, without beauty and without splendour. The design is great; but does not yet seem possible. But therefore let us see what instruments the holy Jesus chose, to effect these so mighty changes: to persuade so many propositions; to endear so great sufferings; to overcome so great enemies; to master so many impossibilities, which this doctrine and this law, from this Master, were sure to meet withal.

Their Instruments.

~~Here~~, here it is, that the divinity of the power is proclaimed. When a man goes to war, he raises as great

an army as he can, to out-number his enemy. But when God fights, three hundred men, that lap like a dog, are sufficient; nay, one word can dissolve the greatest army. He that means to effect any thing, must have means of his own proportionable. And if they be not, he must fail, or derive them from the mighty.

See, then, with what instruments the holy Jesus sets upon this great reformation of the world. Twelve men of obscure and poor birth, of contemptible trades and quality, without learning, without breeding;—these men were sent into the midst of a knowing and wise world, to dispute with the most famous philosophers of Greece; to outwit all the learning of Athens; to out-preach all the Roman orators; to introduce into a newly-settled empire, which would be impatient of novelties and change, such a change as must destroy all their temples, or remove thence all their gods. Against which change, all the zeal of the world, and all the passions, and all the seeming pretences which they could make, must needs be violently opposed:—a change that introduced new laws, and caused them to reverse the old; to change that religion under which their fathers long did prosper, and under which the Roman empire obtained so great a grandeur, for a religion which, in appearance, was silly and humble, meek and peaceable; not apt indeed to do harm, but exposing men to all the harm in the world; abating their courage, blunting their swords, teaching peace and unactiveness, and making the soldiers' arms in a

manner useless, and untying their military girdle; a religion which contradicted their reasons of state, and erected new judicatories, and made the Roman courts to be silent and without causes; a religion that gave countenance to the poor and pitiful: but in a time when riches were adored, and ambition esteemed the greatest nobleness, and pleasure thought to be the chiefest good, it brought no peculiar blessing to the rich or mighty, unless they would become poor and humble in some real sense or other; a religion that would change the face of things, and would also pierce into the secrets of the soul, and unravel all the intrigues of hearts, and reform all evil manners, and break vile habits into gentleness and counsel.

That such a religion, in such a time, preached by such mean persons, should triumph over the philosophy of the world, and the arguments of the subtle, and the sermons of the eloquent, and the power of princes, and the interest of states, and the inclinations of nature, and the blindness of zeal, and the force of custom, and the pleasures of sin, and the busy arts of the devil; that is, against wit, and power, and money, and religion, and wilfulness, and fame, and empire, which are all the things in the world that can make a thing impossible;—this, I say, could not be by the proper force of such instruments: for no man can span heaven with an infant's palm, nor govern wise empires with diagrams. It were impudence to send a footman to command Cæsar to lay down his arms, to command his legions, and throw himself into Tiber, or

keep a tavern next to Pompey's theatre. But if a sober man shall stand alone, unarmed, undefended, or unprovided, and shall tell that he will make the sun stand still, or remove a mountain, or reduce Xerxes' army to the scantling of a single troop; he that believes he will and can do this, must believe he does it by a higher power than he can yet perceive. And so it was in the present transaction.

For that the holy Jesus made invisible powers to do him visible honours; that his Apostles hunted the demons from their tripods, their navels, their dens, their hollow pipes, their temples, and their altars; that He made the oracles silent, as Lucian, Porphyry, Celsus, and other heathens confess; that against the order of new things, which let them be never so profitable or good, do yet suffer reproach, and cannot prevail, unless they commence in a time of advantage and favour; yet that this should flourish like the palm by pressure, grow glorious by opposition, thrive by persecution, and was demonstrated by objections, argues a higher cause than the immediate instrument.

Power from on High.

Now how this higher cause did intervene, is visible and notorious. The Apostles were not learned; but the holy Jesus promised that He would send down wisdom from above, from the Father of spirits. They had no power; but they should be invested with power from on high. They were ignorant and timorous; but

He would make them learned and confident : and so He did. He promised that in a few days He would send the Holy Ghost upon them ; and He did so. After ten days they felt and saw a glorious immission from heaven ; lights of movcable fire sitting upon their heads. And that light did illuminate their hearts ; and the mighty rushing wind inspired them with a power of speaking divers languages, and brought to their remembrances all that Jesus did and taught, and made them wise to conduct souls, and bold to venture, and prudent to advise, and powerful to do miracles, and witty to convince gainsayers, and hugely instructed in the Scriptures, and gave them the spirit of government, and the spirit of prophecy.

This thing was so public, that at the first notice of it three thousand souls were converted on that very day, at the very time when it was done. For it was certainly a visible demonstration of an invisible power, that ignorant persons who were never taught, should, in an instant, speak all the languages of the Roman empire. And, indeed, this thing was so necessary to be so, and so certain that it was so, so public, and so evident, and so reasonable, and so useful, that it is not easy to say whether it was the indication of a greater power, or a greater wisdom. And now the means were proportionable enough to the biggest end. Without learning, they could not confute the learned world ; but therefore God became their teacher. Without power, they could not break the devil's violence ; but therefore God gave them power. Without courage,

they could not contest against all the violence of the Jews and Gentiles; but therefore God was their strength, and gave them fortitude. Without great caution and providence, they could not avoid the traps of crafty persecutors; but therefore God gave them caution, and made them provident. And as Bezaleel and Aholiab received the Spirit of God, the spirit of understanding, to enable them to work excellently in the tabernacle, so had the Apostles, to make them wise for the work of God, and the ministries of his diviner tabernacle, which God pitched, not man.

Immediately upon this, the Apostles, to make a fulness of demonstration, and an undeniable conviction, gave the Spirit to others also, to Jews and Gentiles, and to the men of Samaria; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Then they preached to all nations, and endured all persecutions, and cured all diseases, and raised the dead to life, and were brought before tribunals, and confessed the name of Jesus, and convinced the blasphemous Jews out of their own prophets; and not only prevailed upon women and weak men, but even upon the bravest and wisest. All the disciples of John the Baptist, the Nazarenes and Ebionites, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, Sergius the president, Dionysius, an Athenian judge, and Polycarpus, Justinus and Irenæus, Athenagoras and Origen, Tertullian and Clemens of Alexandria, could not be such fools, as upon a matter, not certainly true, but probably false, to unravel their former principles, and to change their liberty for a prison, wealth for

poverty, honour for disreputation, life for death ; if by such exchange they had not been secured of truth, and holiness, and the will of God.

But above all these was Saul, a bold and a witty, a zealous and learned young man, who, going with letters to persecute the Christians of Damascus, was, by a light from heaven, called from his furious march, reproved by God's angel for persecuting the cause of Jesus, was sent to the city, baptized by a Christian minister, instructed and sent abroad, and he became the prodigy of the world for learning and zeal, for preaching and writing, for labour and sufferance, for government and wisdom. He was admitted to see the holy Jesus after the Lord was taken into heaven ; he was taken up into Paradise ; he conversed with angels ; he saw unspeakable rays of glory. And besides that himself said it, who had no reason to lie, who would get nothing by it here but a conjugation of troubles, and who should get nothing by it hereafter if it were false ; besides this, I say, that he did all those acts of zeal and obedience for the promotion of the religion, does demonstrate he had reason extraordinary for so sudden a change, so strange a labour, so frequent and incomparable sufferings. And therefore, as he did and suffered so much upon such glorious motives, so he spared not to publish it to all the world : he spake it to kings and princes ; he told it to the envious Jews. He had partners of his journey, who were witnesses of the miraculous accident. And in publication he urged the notoriousness of the

fact, as a thing not feigned, not private, but done at noon-day, under the test of competent persons. And it was a thing that proved itself, for it was effective of a present, a great, and a permanent change.

Success of Christianity.

BUT now, it is no new wonder, but a pursuance of the same conjugation of great and divine things, that the fame and religion of Jesus were with so incredible a swiftness scattered over the face of the habitable world, from one end of the earth unto the other. It filled all Asia immediately. It passed presently to Europe, and to the furthest Africans. And all the way it went, it told nothing but a holy and a humble story, that He who came to bring it into the world died an ignominious death. And yet this death did not take away their courage, but added much; for they could not fear death for that Master, whom they knew to have for their sakes suffered death, and came to life again.

But now infinite numbers of persons of all sexes, and all ages, and all countries, came in to the holy crucifix. And he that was crucified in the reign of Tiberius, was in the time of Nero, even in Rome itself, and in Nero's family, by many persons esteemed for a god. And it was upon public record that He was so acknowledged. And this was by a Christian, Justin Martyr, urged to the senate and the emperors themselves. Who, if it had been otherwise, could

easily have confuted the bold allegation of the Christian, who yet did die for that Jesus who was so speedily reputed for a god. The cross was worn upon breasts, printed in the hair, drawn upon foreheads, carried on banners, put upon crowns imperial. And yet the Christians were sought for to punishments, and exquisite punishments sought forth for them. Their goods were confiscate, their names odious, prisons were their houses; and so many kinds of tortures invented for them, that Domitius Ulpianus hath spent seven books in describing the variety of tortures the poor Christian was put to at his first appearing. And yet in despite of all this, and ten thousand other objections and impossibilities, whatsoever was for them made the religion grow, and whatsoever was against them made it grow. If they had peace, the religion was prosperous. If they had persecution, it was still prosperous. If princes favoured them, the world came in, because the Christians lived holily. If princes were incensed, the world came in, because the Christians died bravely. They sought for death with greediness; they desired to be grinded in the teeth of lions; and with joy they beheld the wheels and the bended trees, the racks and the gibbets, the fires and the burning irons, which were like the chair of Elias to them, instruments to carry them to heaven, into the bosom of their beloved Jesus.

Who would not acknowledge the divinity of this
and the excellency of this institution, that
did see infants to weary the hands of hangmen, for

the testimony of Jesus? and wise men preach this doctrine for no other visible reward, but shame and death, poverty and banishment? and hangmen converted by the blood of martyrs springing upon their faces, which their impious hands and cords have strained through their flesh? Who would not have confessed the honour of Jesus, when he should see miracles done at the tombs of martyrs, and devils tremble at the mention of the name of Jēsus, and the world running to the honour of the poor Nazarene, and kings and queens kissing the feet of the poor servants of Jesus? Could a few fishermen and a publican effect all this, for the son of a poor maiden of Judca? Can we suppose all the world, or so great a part of mankind, can consent by chance, or suffer such changes for nothing, or for any thing less than this?

The son of the poor maiden was the Son of God. And the fishermen spake by a Divine Spirit. And they caught the world with holiness and miracles, with wisdom and power, bigger than the strength of all the Roman legions.

Divine Prophecies.

AND what can be added to all this, but this thing alone, to prove the divinity of Jesus? He is a God, or at least is taught by God, who can foretell future contingencies. And so did the holy Jesus. And so did his disciples. Our blessed Lord, while He was alive, foretold that after his death his religion should

flourish more than when He was alive. He foretold persecutions to his disciples. He foretold the mission of the Holy Ghost to be in a very few days after his ascension; which within ten days came to pass. He prophesied that the fact of Mary Magdalen, in anointing the head and feet of her Lord, should be public and known as the Gospel itself, and spoken of in the same place. He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and the signs of its approach; and that it should be by war; and particularly, after the manner of prophets, symbolically named the nation that should do it, pointing out the Roman eagles. He foretold his death, and the manner of it; and plainly beforehand published his resurrection, and told them it should be the sign to that generation, viz. the great argument to prove him to be the Christ. He prophesied that there should arise false Christs after him; and it came to pass, to the extreme great calamity of the nation. And lastly, He foretold that his beloved disciple, St. John, should tarry upon the earth till his coming again, that is, to his coming to judgment upon Jerusalem: and that his religion should be preached to the Gentiles; that it should be scattered over all the world, and be received by all nations; that it should stay upon the face of the earth till his last coming to judge all the world; and that the gates of hell should not be able to prevail against his Church. Which prophecy is made good thus long, till this day, and is as a continual argument to justify the divinity of the

author.

The continuance of the religion helps to continue it, for it proves that it came from God, who foretold that it should continue. And therefore it must continue, because it came from God. And therefore it came from God, because it does and shall for ever continue, according to the word of the holy Jesus.

But after our blessed Lord was entered into glory, the disciples also were prophets. Agabus foretold the dearth that was to be in the Roman empire in the days of Claudius Cæsar, and that St. Paul should be bound at Jerusalem. St. Paul foretold the entering in of heretics into Asia after his departure. And he and St. Peter and St. Jude, and generally the rest of the apostles, had two great predictions, which they used not only as a verification of the doctrine of Jesus, but as a means to strengthen the hearts of the disciples who were so broken with persecution. The one was, that there should arise a sect of vile men, who should be enemies to religion and to government, and cause a great apostacy; which happened notoriously in the sect of the Gnostics, which those three apostles and St. John notoriously and plainly do describe. And the other was, that although the Jewish nation did mightily oppose the religion, it should be but for a while, for they should be destroyed in a short time, and their nation made extremely miserable; but for the Christians, if they would fly from Jerusalem, and go to Pella, there should not a hair of their head perish. The verification of this prophecy the Christians extremely longed for, and wondered it staid so long, and

began to be troubled at the delay, and suspected all was not well, when the great proof of their religion was not verified. And while they were in thoughts of heart concerning it, the sad catalysis did come, and swept away eleven hundred thousand of the nation; and from that day forward the nation was broken in pieces with intolerable calamities. They are scattered over the face of the earth, and are a vagabond nation; but yet, like oil in a vessel of wine, broken into bubbles, but kept in their own circles. And they shall never be an united people till they are servants of the holy Jesus; but shall remain without priest or temple, without altar or sacrifice, without city or country, without the land of promise, or the promise of a blessing, till our Jesus is their High Priest, and the Shepherd to gather them into his fold.

And this very thing is a mighty demonstration against the Jews by their own prophets. For when Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Malachi, had prophesied the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, and the change of the old law, and the introduction of a new by the Messias, that this was He, was therefore certain, because He taught the world a new law; and presently after the publication of this, the old was abrogate, and not only went into desuetude, but into a total abolition among all the world. And for those of the remnant of the scattered Jews who obstinately blaspheme, the law is become impossible to them, and they placed in such circumstances that they need not dispute concerning its obligation. For

it being external and corporal, ritual, and at last made also local, when the circumstances are impossible, the law that was wholly ceremonial and circumstantial must needs pass away : and when they have lost their priesthood, they cannot retain the law, as no man takes care to have his beard shaved when his head is off.

And it is a wonder to consider how the anger of God is gone out upon that miserable people, and that so great a blindness is fallen upon them. It being evident and notorious that the Old Testament was nothing but a shadow and umbrage of the New, that the prophecies of that are plainly verified in this : that all the predictions of the Messias are most undeniably accomplished in the person of Jesus Christ, so that they cannot with any plausibleness or colour be turned any other way, and be applied to any other person ; although the Jews make illiterate allegations, and prodigious dreams, by which they have fooled themselves for sixteen hundred years together, and still hope without reason, and are confident without revelation, and pursue a shadow while they quit the glorious body.

While in the mean time the Christian prays for his conversion, and is at rest in the truth of Jesus, and hath certain unexpressible confidences and internal lights, clarities of the Holy Spirit of God, and loves to the holy Jesus produced in his soul, that he will die when he cannot dispute ; and is satisfied and he knows not how ; and is sure by comforts, and comforted by the excellency of his belief, which speaks nothing but holiness, and light, and reason, and peace, and satis-

factions infinite. Because he is sure that all the world can be happy, if they would live by the religion of Jesus; and that neither societies of men, nor single persons, can have felicity but by this; and that therefore God, who so decrees to make men happy, hath also decreed that it shall for ever be upon the face of the earth, till the earth itself shall be no more. Amen.

Other Religions.

Now if against this vast heap of things, any man shall but confront the pretences of any other religion, and see how they fail both of reason and holiness, of wonder and divinity; how they enter by force, and are kept up by human interests; how ignorant and unholy, how unlearned and pitiful are their pretences; the darkness of these must add great eminency to the brightness of that. For the Jews' religion, which came from heaven, is therefore not now to be practised, because it did come from heaven, and was to expire into the Christian, it being nothing but the image of this perfection. And the Jews needed no other argument but this, that God had made their's impossible now to be done. For he that ties to ceremonies and outward usages, temples and altars, sacrifices and priests, troublesome and expensive rites, and figures of future signification, means that there should be an abode and fixed dwelling. For these are not to be done by an ambulatory people. And therefore since God hath scattered the people into atoms and

crumbs of society, without temple or priest, without sacrifice or altar, without Urim or Thummim, without prophet or vision, even communicating with them no way but by ordinary providence, it is but too evident, that God hath nothing to do with them in the matter of that religion; but that it is expired, and no way obligatory to them, or pleasing to him, which is become impossible to be acted. Whereas the Christian religion is as eternal as the soul of a man, and can no more cease than our spirits can die; and can worship upon mountains and caves, in fields and churches, in peace and war, in solitude and society, in persecution and in sunshine, by night and by day; and be solemnized by clergy and laity in the essential parts of it, and is the perfection of the soul, and the highest reason of man, and the glorification of God.

But for the heathen religions, it is evidently to be seen, that they are nothing but an abuse of the natural inclination which all men have to worship a God; whom because they know not, they guess at in the dark. For that they know there is and ought to be, something that hath the care and providence of their affairs. But the body of their religion is nothing but little arts of governments, and stratagems of princes, and devices to secure the government of new usurpers, or to make obedience to the laws sure, by being sacred: and to make the yoke that was not natural, pleasant by something that is. But yet for the whole body of it, who sees not that their worshippings could not be sacred, because they were done by something

that is impure? They appeased their gods with adulteries and impure mixtures; by such things which Cato was ashamed to see; by gluttonous eatings of flesh, and impious drinkings. And they did *litare in humano sanguine*; they sacrificed men and women and children to their demons; as is notorious in the rites of Bacchus Omesta amongst the Greeks, and of Jupiter, to whom a Greek and a Greekess, a Galatian and a Galatess, were yearly offered.

In the answers of the oracles to Calchas, as appears in Homer and Virgil, who sees not that crimes were warranted by the example of their immortal gods? and that what did dishonour themselves, they sang to the honour of their gods, whom they affirmed to be passionate and proud, jealous and revengeful, amorous and lustful, fearful and impatient, drunken and sleepy, weary and wounded? that the religions were made lasting by policy and force; by ignorance and the force of custom; by the preferring an inveterate error, and loving of a quiet and prosperous evil; by the arguments of pleasure, and the correspondences of sensuality; by the fraud of oracles, and the patronage of vices; and because they feared every change as an earthquake, as supposing overturnings of their old error to be the eversion of their well-established governments?

And it had been ordinarily impossible that ever Christianity should have entered, if the nature and excellency of it had not been such as to enter like rain into a fleece of wool, or the sun into a window,

without noise or violence, without emotion, and disordering the political constitution, without causing trouble to any man, but what his own ignorance or peevishness was pleased to spin out of his own bowels;—but did establish governments, secure obedience, made the laws firm, and the persons of princes to be sacred. It did not oppose force by force, nor strike princes for justice. It defended itself against enemies by patience, and overcame them by kindness. It was the great instrument of God to demonstrate his power in our weakness, and to do good to mankind by the imitation of his excellent goodness.

Lastly, he that considers concerning the religion and person of Mahomet,—that he was a vicious person, lustful and tyrannical; that he propounded incredible and ridiculous propositions to his disciples; that it entered by the sword, by blood and violence, by murder and robbery; that it propounds sensual rewards, and allures to compliance by bribing our basest lusts; that it conserves itself by the same means it entered; that it is unlearned and foolish; against reason and the discourses of all wise men; that it did no miracles, and made false prophecies: in short, that in the person that founded it, in the article it persuades, in the manner of prevailing, in the reward it offers, it is unholy, and foolish, and rude: it must needs appear to be void of all pretence, and that no man of reason can ever be fairly persuaded by arguments, that it is the daughter of God, and came down from heaven.

The Conclusion.

SINCE therefore there is nothing to be said for any other religion, and so very much for Christianity, every one of whose pretences can be proved as well as the things themselves do require, and as all the world expects such things, should be proved;—it follows that the holy Jesus is the Son of God; that his religion is commanded by God, and is that way by which He will be worshipped and honoured; and that there is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved, but only by the name of the Lord Jesus.

He that puts his soul upon this cannot perish. Neither can he be reproved who hath so much reason and argument for his religion. *Sit anima mea cum Christianis*; I pray God my soul may be numbered amongst the Christians.

THE END.

ARCHBISHOP SECKER'S

FIVE SERMONS

AGAINST

POPERY.

ARRANGED UNDER DIFFERENT HEADS.

BY THE LATE RIGHT REV.
BEILBY PORTER, D.D.
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PART I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE happiness of all creatures depends entirely on their obedience to His will whose sovereign power created and rules the world. Now the will of God is made known to us in part by natural reason: and they who have no other law shall be judged by that alone. But as reason was unable to teach mankind a great number of things very important to be known, and in fact did teach most of them but a small part of what it might have done; God was mercifully pleased to superadd the light of revelation to it, and place us under the conduct of both jointly. Such an additional provision, it might have been hoped, had cleared up all doubts; but partly the weakness, partly the wickedness of men, hath turned even this light into darkness, and made it multiply disputes instead of ending them. Still we have no reason to be discouraged; for every upright and considerate person may, after all, with due care, very easily see his way before him clearly enough to walk in it. But we have great reason to use this care, and make such enquiry amidst the different paths, which different persons point out to us, as will give us cause to be satisfied we choose the right. Now of all the different opinions which have arisen concerning the Christian religion, there have been few so remarkable as that which divides

this part of the world into *Popish* and *Protestant*. Those of the former communion, it seems, think us of the latter quite out of the way to salvation, and accordingly are unwearied in persuading, as they have opportunity, the members of our Church, especially the lower and more ignorant part of them, to quit it for theirs. The necessity of doing this, they insist upon sometimes with so much plausibility, and always with so much confidence, that I hope you will not think a few pages ill-employed on a subject of such very great importance both to our private satisfaction and public security, in refuting the arguments they usually bring against us, and *testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand*¹. To proceed regularly in this matter, I shall,

I. Enquire what is the rule of Christian faith and life: and

II. Examine by this rule the peculiar doctrines and practices of the *Romish* Church.

¹ 1 Pet. v. 12.

CONCERNING THE RULE
OF
CHRISTIAN FAITH AND LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Scripture shown to be this Rule.

As Jesus Christ is the sole *Author of our Faith*¹, those things, and those alone, which he taught himself, and commissioned his disciples to teach, are parts of our faith. What his doctrine was we find in no less than four accounts of his life and preaching given in the Gospels. To what belief his disciples converted men, we find in the Acts. What they taught men after their conversion, we read in the Epistles. These several books, which make up the New Testament, all Christians allow to contain an original, and undoubtedly true account of our religion. The only possible question is, Whether they contain a full and clear account? Now such a one they without question intended to give, for what could induce them designedly to give any other? Besides, St. *Luke*, in the very beginning of his Gospel, tells us, that *having a perfect understanding of those things which were believed amongst Christians, he had taken in hand to set forth a declaration of them, that those he wrote to might know the certainty of what they had been instructed in.* And

¹ Heb. xii. 2.

St. John, in the conclusion of his, tells us, that though our Saviour *did*, and doubtless said also, *many things that were not written in that Book, yet these*, says he, *are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing he might have life through his name*¹. This being then their intention, can we possibly think they failed of it? Two of the Evangelists at least were constantly present at our Saviour's discourses; the other two heard them either from him or his immediate followers, and they had the promise of his Spirit *to bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them*². Could they after all forget any part of this that was material and necessary? That any of them should do so is very strange: much more that they all should. That St. Luke, the companion of the Apostles, and the writer of their Acts, that he too, in relating what they taught their converts, should unhappily omit any thing essential, still adds to the wonder; and that no one of the many Epistles written to instruct the Churches in their faith and duty, should supply this defect, is beyond all belief.

CHAPTER II.

Scripture sufficiently intelligible.

BUT supposing the Scripture ever so perfect in itself, yet the Church of Rome objects that it is not clear to us; even to the learned many things are hard to be understood, which therefore to the unlearned must be impossible. Nay, sometimes, they tell us not one sentence of it hath a meaning, which by our own private judgment we can be certain of. But surely the Apostles were not worse writers *with* a divine assistance, than others commonly are *without* it. What they spoke and preached was plain;

¹ John xx. 30, 31.

² John xiv. 26.

else they spoke to no purpose; and why should not the same things be as plain when they were written down? Some passages indeed might to some persons be difficult, even at first; and more are doubtless become so by length of time. But that the main of the New Testament is intelligible enough, cannot be with any modesty denied. And for the rest, what at first sight is difficult, may, with due consideration of our own, and help of others, be made easy; what is obscurely expressed in one place, may be clearly expressed in another; and what is clearly expressed in no place, ~~we~~ may safely, for that very reason, conclude it is not necessary for us to understand or believe.

CHAPTER III.

The Scriptures are delivered down to us uncorrupted.

BUT allowing the Scriptures to have been at first sufficiently intelligible, how do we know they are come down to us uncorrupted? I answer, by all the same arguments which prove the incorruptness of any other ancient book in the world, and by this argument farther, that these books having many more copies of them, being much wider dispersed, and much more carefully read, and warmly disputed about, than any other whatever; it is in proportion more incredible, than either chance or design should alter them in any thing considerable, without discovery from some quarter, even were no particular Providence to watch over writings so worthy of its care. And accordingly in fact amidst all the various readings which such a number of copies must produce, there is not one that affects the least article of our religion. But if ever so faithfully preserved, still how shall the unlearned know when they are faithfully translated? Why, most passages all parties agree in, and on those they disagree about, common sense, comparison of other texts, consideration

of what goes before and after, and consulting, as opportunity offers, judicious and honest persons of different persuasions, will enable any person to pass a sufficient judgment, so far as he is concerned to judge, which is right and which is wrong, which is clear and which is doubtful. Indeed there is in general but little danger of any gross impositions upon men being attempted, much less succeeding for any continuance, in a land of knowledge and freedom, whatever may be or hath been under popish tyranny and darkness. Since therefore the Scriptures contain a full and clear account of Christianity written by the very Apostles and first disciples of our Lord himself, and honestly delivered down into our hands, we have plainly such a rule for our faith as all men in all cases are ever satisfied with, nor have we any need to look farther. And yet the farther we do look into other pretended rules, the better we shall be satisfied with that we have already. For, let what will be said against Scripture as not being a sufficient rule, it must be a sufficient one, unless there be some other; and upon a fair examination, it will evidently appear there is no other.

CHAPTER IV.

Tradition exploded.

THE *Romanists* tell us of a rule of faith, which they speak of in very high terms; and that is, the traditionary doctrine of what they call the Catholic Church. The Apostles, they say, instructed their converts very diligently in every article of faith. Those converts again, knowing it to be their indispensable duty, could not fail to instruct with the same diligence; ministers their flocks, parents their children, every Christian his neighbour. And thus by a continued succession of teaching, all the doctrines of religion are handed down in their Church, they tell us, uncorrupted to this day. Whoever

either added, omitted, or changed any thing, must, they think, by every one round him, be immediately charged with a mistake; and, if he persisted in it, convicted of a heresy, while the rest were confirmed in the ancient truth. And therefore, to hold what the Church holds, is a rule that can never mislead us. Now it must be owned indeed that our Saviour delivered his doctrine to the Apostles, and they to all the world, by word of mouth; and this way of delivery at first was sufficient, and therefore St. Paul exhorts the *Thessalonians* to hold fast the traditions he had taught them, whether by word or by letter¹. But then, in the nature of things, how long could this last? Suppose but the easiest common story were to be told from one person to another, without being written down, for only 100 or 200 years, and let each person, as he received it, have never so strict a charge to tell it in the same manner; yet, long before the end of that time, what security could we possibly have that it was true at first, and unaltered still? And you cannot but see there is much less security, that a considerable number of doctrines, especially such as compose the *Popish* creed, should be brought down safe for 1700 years together, through so many millions of hands, that were all liable, through ignorance, forgetfulness, and superstition, to mistake them, or, through knavery and design, to alter them. But it will be said, in a case of such importance as religion, men would be more careful in delivering truth than in others. Undoubtedly they ought; but who can be secure that they would? It is of equal importance to be careful in practising it too: yet we all know how this hath been neglected in the world: and therefore have reason to think the other hath been no less so. But whoever made the first change, they say, must have been immediately discovered. Now so far from this, that persons make changes in what they relate,

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 15.

without discovering it themselves: alterations come in by insensible degrees: one man leaves out or varies, or adds one little circumstance: the next, another: till it grows imperceptibly into a different thing. In one age a doctrine is delivered as a probable opinion; the following age speaks of it as certain truth; and the third advances it into an article of faith. Perhaps an opposition rises upon this, as many have done: some have said, such a doctrine *was* delivered to them, others that it was not: and who can tell, whether, at last, the right side or the wrong have prevailed? Only this is certain, that which soever prevails, though by a small majority at first, will use all means of art and power to make it appear an universal consent at last: and then plead uninterrupted tradition. But though such things as these may possibly be done in almost any age, yet they are easy to be done in such ages, as were five or six of those that preceded the reformation; when, by the confession of their own historians, both clergy and laity were so universally and so monstrously ignorant and vicious, that nothing was too bad for them to do, or too absurd for them to believe. But still they tell us, we Protestants receive it upon the authority of tradition, that Scripture is the word of God: and why can we not as well receive other things upon the same authority? I answer, we receive Scripture by no means upon the authority of tradition merely; much less the tradition of their present Church; but partly on account of its own reasonableness, and the characters of divine wisdom in it; partly from the testimony which one part of it bears to the other; and lastly, upon the written evidence given us, chiefly indeed by the earliest Christians, but in some measure also by Jews and Heathens themselves, that the authors of these books were the disciples of our Lord, and the things said by them true. But then to tell us, that because we receive Scripture upon this evidence, we must therefore receive a long list of doctrines upon mere

additions, after seventeen ages, is to affirm, that the memory of things may be as well preserved for ever, by general rumour and hearsay, as by authentic records. But here they plead, that the tradition which they depend on is not altogether unwritten, but partly recorded by the ancient Fathers of the Church. To this we answer, that we acknowledge truly ancient writers, in matters where they all agree, to be a very valuable evidence of the faith, though at the same time a fallible one. And we can prove undeniably, that these writers, in proportion as they lived near the days of the Apostles, were of our faith, not theirs. But as this is a proof in our favour that few persons are capable of entering into, so we have happily a much shorter. For if antiquity be an argument, the greater the antiquity, the stronger the argument: and therefore the authority of the Bible, for this, as well as many other reasons, is the strongest of all. An original account is always to be depended on in the first place. Such others, as come a little after in point of time, may be of considerable use to illustrate and confirm the former; but wherever they appear to contradict it, must be rejected without scruple. And those which come a great deal after, such as the Church of *Rome* chiefly depends on, deserve little or no credit. The Spirit of God, therefore, seeing the need there would be of it, inspired the Apostles and Evangelists to deliver a full and clear rule of faith to all posterity in the New Testament: certainly not that this might be interpreted afterwards by tradition into whatever sense men pleased; (for then tradition alone had done as well or better without it) but that tradition, as often as it went wrong, might be rectified by this. Had not Christianity been committed in the earliest ages to writing, long before this time, in all probability, there had been scarce one doctrine of it left, which we could have been secure was genuine. And though tradition had doubtless been preserved,

by having some regard to Scripture, from degenerating and varying near so much as it would else; yet, for want of having a sufficient regard to it, first needless, then uncertain, then false and pernicious articles of belief have crept in among Christians; the very steps of whose entry, for the most part, we can trace. The faith of the first ages changed by little and little every age, and still for the worse; till at length the Church of *Rome*, about 200 years ago, at the council of *Trent*, when they were called upon to reform these abuses, most shamefully chose to establish them under the venerable name of primitive tradition, and condemn all who will not receive them with the same regard as Scripture itself. Just as in our Saviour's time it was among the *Jews*, who asked, *Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders? And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition*¹. And just as St. *Paul* had foretold it would happen among Christians, *Beware, lest any man spoil you through vain deceit, after the tradition of men, and not after Christ*.² But here they reply, that, let this passage be designed against whom it will, it cannot fall on them. For, however uncertain tradition might become of itself in process of time, and however difficult it may be for private persons to judge of doctrines by it, yet the judgment of the Catholic Church in these points is infallible, and theirs is that Catholic Church.

¹ Mark vii. 5. 9.

² Col. ii. 8.

CHAPTER V.

The pretended Infallibility of the Church of Rome confuted.

THAT their church is infallible, the Papists sometimes attempt to prove from reason. Making it so was the only way to end disputes, and therefore God being wise and good, *must* have made it so. But certainly a much more effectual way of preventing disputes and errors had been to have made every single man infallible; and yet God hath not done this. It might therefore be more modest for them to let him show his wisdom and goodness in what way he pleases. The *Jewish* church, we know, was not infallible. For they denied their Saviour, and it was by following tradition that they came to do it. How then does it appear that the Christian must be more infallible! Why, they have texts of Scripture to prove this. But if, as they commonly tell us, the Scripture can neither be proved nor understood, but by the infallible authority of the Church; how can the infallible authority of the Church be proved or understood by Scripture? However, let us hear these texts. Our Saviour told his Apostles, that the Comforter *should come and lead them into all truth*¹. But perhaps this was said only to the Apostles: and, had it been said to them and their successors, or, which is still a different thing, to the whole Church; yet so St. John² tells all believers, *they have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things*; that is, things necessary; not that they were not capable of mistaking, but that with due care, they might avoid it if they would. Again, he promised his disciples, that *he would be with them to the end of the world*³. And so he hath promised every single Christian to be *with*

¹ John xvi. 13.² 1 John ii. 20.³ Matt. xxviii. 20.

*them and dwell in them*¹: yet this does not hinder but they may both misunderstand, and even renounce Christianity if they please. But he declares also, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church*². But *the gates of hell*, or, as it might be translated, *of the invisible world*, mean nothing else than *the power of death*, i. e. the terror of persecution, as the learned well know. And it can never follow, that because persecution shall not destroy the Church, error shall not corrupt it. Or were this expression, *the gates of hell*, to comprehend error, it must at least equally comprehend sin. And therefore, as this promise does not hinder the Church universal from being more or less defiled by sin, so neither from being deformed by error. And the most our Saviour meant to promise, is, that neither shall totally abolish, though, through the faults of men, both may greatly pollute it. They plead farther, that St. Paul says, *the Church of God is the pillar and ground of the truth*³; but they know at the same time, that this passage of St. Paul is fairly capable of two⁴ other translations, either of which turns it to a different sense. Or were this the only sense, we acknowledge the Church was then, and ought always to be, and in some measure always is, a pillar and support of truth; and so in his proportion is every believer; and therefore of every single good Christian our Saviour says in the *Revelation*⁵, *I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God*. But then it does not follow from hence, that any one Christian, or the majority of Christians, so support

¹ 2 Cor. vi. 16.² Matt. xvi. 18.³ 1 Tim. iii. 15.

* Some suppose that Timothy is here called the *pillar and ground of truth*, thus Gal. ii. 9. it is said of James, Peter, and John, that they *seemed to be pillars*, i. e. chief supporters of the Christian Church. Others divide thus: *the pillar and ground of truth*, and without controversy, *great is the mystery of godliness*: making St. Paul assert, that the foundation upon which the Gospel rests, is the doctrine that *God was manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, &c.*

⁴ Rev. iii. 12.

the truth, as that they do and ever will profess it all, without any mixture of error; and unless this be done, there is no infallibility. But they argue farther, that our Saviour directs¹, *if a man neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican*. But what is he there speaking of? Let us read the context. *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go, and tell him his fault between him and thee alone. If he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more. If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church. If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican*. That is, if a man have done you an injury, first admonish him privately of it. If that avail not, tell the Church: not the universal church sure throughout all the world, but the particular one you both belong to. And if he will not reform upon their reproof, look on him no longer as a true Christian, but an ill man. Here therefore is not one word said about disobeying the determination of the Catholic Church concerning a disputed doctrine: but about slighting the admonition of a particular church concerning a known sin, and particular churches are owned to be fallible.

Again, they say it is an article of our Creed, that we *believe in the Catholic Church*. But then they know the meaning of this is not that we believe whatever this church, or any who please to call themselves so, shall at any time assert. But, as believing in the resurrection of the body is only believing that such a resurrection shall be, so believing in the Catholic Church, is only believing that such a Church is: that Christ hath united his followers into one regular society or body, of which himself is the Head: which society or church is therefore called Catholic or Universal, because it consists of all nations; whereas the *Jewish* church

¹ Matt. xviii. 17.

18 *Neither the Pope nor general Councils infallible.*

was not Catholic, but particular, consisting only of one nation. But whether this Church be infallible or not, the Creed says nothing. They that can lay a stress on such wretched arguments as these, how would they have triumphed, had the same things have been said of their Church, that are said of the *Jewish Church*? *If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, says Moses, thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, that shall be in those days, and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they shall inform thee; thou shalt not decline from the sentence that they shall shew thee, to the right hand nor to the left¹: for by their word shall every controversy be tried². The Scribes and Pharisees, says our Saviour, sit in Moses' seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do³.* Now if these very strong expressions did not prove that Church infallible, (as certainly they do not; for then Christianity, which they rejected, would not be true) how can much weaker expressions prove any other to be so? But they who will needs have the Church to be infallible, and the rule of our faith instead of Scripture; what part of it do they make the infallibility reside in? For unless that be clearly known, we are never the better for it; but instead of the same rule of faith, every different opinion about this matter will produce a different rule of faith. And it is a matter in which the opinions of the *Romanists* differ greatly.

CHAPTER VI.

Neither the Pope nor general Councils infallible.

MANY of the Papists say the Pope is infallible, and he himself claims to be so. But then some think he is so in matters of faith only, some in matters of fact too. In most Popish countries it would be

¹ Deut. xvii. 8, &c.

² Deut. xxi. 5.

³ Matt. xxiii. 3.

looked upon as heresy to deny him this prerogative ; in others, as great weakness to ascribe it to him. For a large part of them say nothing is infallible under a General Council, regularly called. But then they have so many different opinions about what makes a council general, and what call of one is regular, that some of them reckon at least eighteen general councils, and some at most but seven or eight : and indeed they might very justly question whether, strictly speaking, there was ever one such in the world. But, farther : which of the decrees and canons of these councils, amongst the infinite forgeries there have been, are genuine, and which not, here again is an endless controversy ; and another as endless, what the meaning of some of the most important ones of them is. In consequence of this they differ and dispute, and have done for ages, (as united as they would seem to be) not only about such silly questions, as whether the *Virgin Mary* was conceived in original sin or not, (and yet about this they were calling one another heretics for three hundred years, and their general councils, with all their infallibility, have not dared to determine the matter to this day ;) but they quarrel equally about things of the greatest moment. To give but one instance of many : whether a king may, for heresy, or disobedience to the Church, be deposed, and his subjects discharged of their allegiance, is a question of as much weight as can well be put. The Popes, and great part of their Church, for six hundred years, have held they might ; and have practised accordingly, as most nations in their turns have felt. But what tradition hath taught, and general councils decreed on this point, is so various and contradictory, that it would take a man's life almost to enquire into it. So that some *popish* writers speak of the affirmative of this question as an article of faith ; and some as a most impious error. One or the other must be impious undoubtedly. Which then are the

20 *Infallibility does not reside in the Romish Church.*

heretics? And what is their infallibility good for, that either cannot, or will not, decide questions of such importance to human society as this?

CHAPTER VII.

Infallibility does not reside in the whole Body, either of the Roman or of the universal Church.

SOME of the *Romanists* allow not even councils to be infallible, and account no doctrine fundamental, unless the whole body of the *Roman Church* hath received it as such. And how shall the ignorant know with certainty when they have all received it, and in what sense they have received it? But why the whole body of the *Roman Church*? What claim hath she of being always in the right more than the Churches of *Greece*, of *Asia*, or *Ethiopia*, who differ from her, as well as we, in many things, and allow her no such privilege? Nor, which is more, did *St. Paul* know of any she had in the least; but, in his Epistle to the Church of *Rome*, bids her *not to be high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the Jews, take heed, lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them—severity; but towards thee, goodness: if thou continue in his goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.* Strange treatment, sure, of an infallible Church! Some persons, therefore, have held infallibility to reside not in the Church of *Rome* particularly, but in the whole body of Christians considered as one, which indeed is the only true Catholic or Universal Church. But the whole body of Christians, in the nature of things, can never meet; and, were it as easy as it is difficult, to collect their several opinions, what one point should we find them in all ages agree in as necessary, besides those general doctrines of Christianity, that are on every hand allowed to be clearly contained in Scripture? Which way soever then we seek for a rule of faith, to Scrip-

ture doctrine we must return; and therefore the best way is, never to depart from it.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Infallible Judge in Matters of Faith not necessary.

THERE are some of the *Romish* communion who will tell us, that in what has been said above we wrong them. They admit Scripture for the rule of faith. But do they admit it for the only one? This they dare not say. Or, if they did, will they allow us, when we have this rule, to know what it means? No; we must never understand the least part of it, though ever so plain, in any different sense from what the Church is pleased to appoint. What then is this but mocking mankind, and giving with one hand, what they immediately take away with the other? But we, they say, are in a pitiable condition, that, having only the dead letter of Scripture to go by, and no living guide or judge to direct us in the interpretation of it, as they have; controversies are always rising among us, and can never be decided. To this we answer, that controversies are what they themselves, even with persecution to help them, can neither prevent nor end any more than we. And in matters of property indeed, some decision, right or wrong, must be made. Society could not subsist without it: but what need of an infallible decision in matters of faith? Why is it not sufficient that every man determine for himself, as well as he can in this world: and that God, the only infallible Judge, will determine with equity concerning us all in the next? But the generality of people they say, are incapable of judging for themselves. Yet the New Testament supposes them both capable of it, and bound to it; and accordingly requires them not only to *try the spirits*, the pretences to infallibility,

22 *An infallible Judge of Faith not necessary.*

whether they be of God¹, but to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good². But were this otherwise: if they are incapable of judging, why do you persuade them to change their judgment? Let them alone in the way they are in. But if they have judgment enough to determine whether the Catholic Church be infallible, whether the Church of *Rome* be the Catholic Church, whether this infallibility be in Pope or council, which decrees of either are genuine, and what is the true meaning of those decrees; all which things they must determine before the infallibility of the Church can be any guide to them: if, I say, every plain man hath ability enough for such points as these, why hath he not ability enough in other cases, to understand common sense and plain Scripture; to judge whether transubstantiation, for instance, be not contrary to the one, and image worship to the other? The *Romanists* themselves own, that men must use their eyes to find this guide: why then must they afterwards put them out to follow him? Especially considering that the only rule, which above ninety-nine parts in a hundred of their communion have to follow, is not the doctrine of councils and popes, even were they infallible: (for of these it is infinitely harder to know any thing than of Scripture) but merely what a few priests and private writers tell them; and so at last, all the pretence to being directed by infallibility ends in being led blindfolded by men, confessedly as fallible as themselves. But all Christians are commanded, they say, to obey *them that have the rule over them in the Lord³*. And it is true, the teaching of the ministers of the Gospel ought to be attended upon; their doctrine followed in all clear cases, and their judgment respected even in doubtful ones. But still we are no more bound to follow our spiritual guides into opinions plainly false, or practices plainly

¹ 1 John iv. 1.

² 1 Thess. v. 21.

³ Heb. xiii. 17.

sinful, than to follow a common guide down a precipice, or into the sea, let our own knowledge of the way be ever so little, or the other's pretences to infallible skill in it ever so great.

CHAPTER IX.

General Rule for the lower People.

THE rule for the unlearned and ignorant in religion is this. Let each man improve his own judgment, and increase his own knowledge as much as he can; and be fully assured that God will expect no more. In matters, for which he must rely on authority, let him rely on the authority of that Church which God's providence hath placed him under, rather than another which he hath nothing to do with; and trust those, who, by encouraging free enquiry, appear to love truth, rather than such, as, by requiring all their doctrines to be implicitly obeyed, seem conscious that they will not bear to be fairly tried. But never let him prefer any authority before that which is the highest of all authority, the written word of God. This therefore let us all carefully study, and not doubt but that whatever things in it are necessary to be believed, are easy to be understood. This let us firmly rely on, and trust to its truth, when it declares itself *able to make us wise unto salvation, perfect, and thoroughly furnished unto all good works*¹. Let others build on fathers and popes, on traditions and councils, what they will: let us continue firm, as we are, *on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone*².

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 13.

² Eph. ii. 20.

PART II.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE general rule of conduct for men to go by is reason; contrary to what this plainly teaches, we neither can nor ought to believe; but beyond what it teaches, on sufficient authority, we justly may. Persuasion founded on authority is called faith: and that which is founded on the authority of our blessed Lord, Christian faith.

Now the rule of this faith, the only means by which we, who live so many ages after him, can learn with certainty what things he hath required as necessary, and what he hath forbidden as unlawful, I have proved to be the holy Scriptures. For these, which confessedly give us a true account of Christianity, do also, as I have shown to you, give us a full and sufficiently clear account of it; and there is none whatever besides, that can be equally depended on. Other antiquity compared with that of Scripture is modern: tradition in its own nature soon grows uncertain; and infallibility is no where to be found on earth. The only thing then we have to rely on in Christianity is the written Word of God. Whatever this forbids is sinful; whatever it requires as a condition of salvation is necessary; whatever it does not so require, is not necessary. By these rules therefore of reason and Scripture let us now proceed, as was proposed in the second place, to try the chief of those doctrines which distinguish the Church of *Rome* from ours.

CHAPTER I.

Saints and Angels not proper Objects of Worship.

WE Protestants worship God, and pray to him through the mediation of Jesus Christ. This the *Romanists* acknowledge to be right. The saints in heaven we love and honour as members of the same mystical body with ourselves. The holy angels we reverence as the ministers of the Divine Will. But as for praying to either, there being no argument for it in reason, nor precept in Scripture, nor indeed example in antiquity for at least three hundred years after Scripture, it surely cannot be a thing necessary. Letting it alone is undoubtedly safe: whether practising it be so, the Church of *Rome* would do well to consider. They tell us, indeed, that they only beg the prayers of the saints in heaven, as we do those of good persons on earth. And were this true, (as I shall prove it is not) we desire our fellow Christians on earth to pray for us, because we know they hear our desires; and surely it is reason enough not to ask those in heaven to do it, because we do not know they hear us, nor have the least cause to think they do. For Scripture, which alone could tell us so, hath told us no such thing. But besides, if we can at all understand Scripture, it hath expressly forbidden all applications to the inhabitants of the invisible world, excepting the Supreme Being. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, says Moses, and him only shalt thou serve*¹. *There is one God, and one Mediator, says St. Paul, between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*². Accordingly we find, that the angel which appeared to St. John in the *Revelation*, forbids any religious honour to be paid him, even when present. *See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant: worship*

¹ Matt. iv. 10.² 1 Tim. ii. 5.

26 *Saints and Angels not proper Objects of Worship.*

God¹. And when some amongst the *Colossians* had affected unjustifiable practices of this kind, St. *Paul* censures them as being in a very dangerous error. *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen².* Yet does the Church of *Rome* intrude so much farther as to pay undue worship to beings far below angels; not only to the saints in heaven, but to some who were so wicked on earth, that there is great reason to fear they are in hell, and to others that are mere fictions of their own imaginations, and never were at all. For the sake of these, and through their merits, they desire, in their public and authorized prayers, God's mercy, sometimes quite omitting to mention the merits of Christ, and sometimes joining his and theirs together. Farther than this, they directly pray to them in the house of God, and in the same posture in which they pray to God; and that not only to intercede with him for them, but, in so many words, that they themselves would bestow grace and mercy upon them, would forgive the guilt of their sins, deliver them from hell, and grant them a place in heaven. What pretence is there now in Christianity for such things as these? And what doth this tend to, but making the ignorant, especially, think their favourite saint can do every thing for them, right or wrong? To him therefore they recommend themselves, not by a religious life, but by flattering addresses and costly presents: on his intercession they often depend much more than our blessed Saviour's; and being secure, as they think, of the favour of these courtiers of heaven, pay little regard to the King of it. Thus is the intent of religion destroyed, and the heathen multitude of deities brought silently back into Christianity.

¹ Rev. xix. 10. xxi. 9.

² Col. ii. 18.

CHAPTER II.

Against the Worship of the Virgin Mary.

THE adoration paid by the Papists to the Virgin Mary is very remarkable. We honour her memory as a person whom *He that is mighty hath peculiarly magnified*, and whom *all generations shall call blessed*¹. But they address her in such terms as follow: *Empress of Heaven; Queen of Angels and Men; through whom, after God, the whole earth liveth; Mother of Mercy; the Fountain of Grace and Salvation; the only hope of Sinners: Who ever trusted in thee, and was confounded? To thee I commit all my Hope, and all my Comfort: under thy Defence is my Refuge; make haste to help me in all things which I shall either do or think every moment of my Life; loose the Bonds of the guilty, enlighten the Eyes of the blind, free us from all Sin, and drive away from us all Evil, grant us to escape eternal Damnation, and cause the Glory of Paradise to be betowed on us.* What authority or what excuse is there now for such expressions as these? And yet every one of them I have myself collected, partly out of their public offices, partly from others of their authorized and approved books of devotion. Formerly in their very Mass Book they went yet farther; and begged her, *by virtue of her parental authority, to command of her Son what they wanted.* But to this very day, in another office, they intimate the same thing, by exhorting her that *she would shew herself to be his Mother.* And the better to make sure of her doing so, they apply to St. Joachim, who they say was her father, though indeed it is not certainly known, at all, who her father was; much less whether he was saint or sinner: However, they apply to St. Joachim, and tell him, that, *as his Daughter can possibly deny him nothing, it*

¹ Luke i. 48, 49.

is in his power to do every thing he will for them. This, you see, is being very artful in making interest: only it is more art than is necessary. For since we are both permitted and appointed to approach God through Christ directly, who, we are certain, both doth hear and will help us, we shall prejudice, instead of benefiting our cause, by making underhand applications to other persons, who, perhaps, never come to know of our petitions, and, if they do, are displeased at them: or, if they were not, can be in comparison of little use to us.

Yet to judge by the practice of the *Romish* Church, who would not think that the whole New Testament were filled with precepts for the worship of the saints, especially the blessed Virgin? Whereas, even in the *Gospels*, she is but seldom occasionally mentioned; our Saviour seeming on purpose to take less notice of her, as if he foresaw what advantages taking more would give to the extravagance of after times. In the *Acts* she is just mentioned once. In the *Epistles* and *Revelation* not at all. Yet these are not half the monstrous things that the *Romanists* are guilty of about her. They have invented a fable of her body being taken up into heaven, and appointed a solemn festival in honour of it. They have instituted a form of devotion called the *Rosary*, in which ten addresses are made to her, for one to God; and successive Popes have granted large indulgences and blessings to all that say it. Then their private writers about her have gone incredible lengths. One of their Cardinals, *Bonaventure*, by putting her name instead of God's, and some other necessary alterations, hath applied the whole book of *Psalms* to her. In the same manner he hath altered the *Te Deum*. *We praise thee, O Mary, we acknowledge thee to be the Lady; and so in the other hymns of the Church.* Nay, he hath made a creed for her, in imitation of *St. Athanasius's*. *Whoever will be*

saved, it is necessary that he hold the true faith concerning Mary; which except a man keep whole and undefiled, he shall perish everlastingly. Now if their Church do really disapprove these things, why do they never censure them? Why is this very man canonized for a Saint, whilst we are condemned as Heretics? For not content with thinking this kind of worship lawful, they pronounce accursed whoever shall think otherwise.

CHAPTER III.

Against the Worship of Images.

ANOTHER thing in which we differ from the Roman Catholics, is this: They make pictures of God the Father under the likeness of a venerable old man. They make images of Christ and of his saints, after their own fancy. Before these images, and even that of his cross, they kneel down and prostrate themselves: to these they lift up their eyes, and in that posture pray. The least appearance of command, or even the allowance, of such practices in Scripture they pretend not; and yet against those who disallow them, they thunder out anathemas. Now as to pictures of the Father Almighty, *whom no man either hath seen, or can see*¹; all visible figures must represent him such as he is not, must lead the ignorant into low and mean ideas of him, and give those of better abilities, from a contempt of such representation, a contempt of the religion that uses them. Anciently the *Heathens* themselves had no images of God; and a very learned *Heathen* observes, that if they had never had any, their worship would have been the purer; for the inventors of these things, says he, lessened among men the reverence of the divine nature, and introduced errors concerning it². The Jews, though

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 16.

² Varro ap. S. Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 4. c. 31. where he says, they had

the Old Testament figuratively expresses, in words, the power and attributes of God by parts of the human form, were yet most strictly forbidden all sensible representations of him under any form. *Take good heed unto yourselves, says Moses, for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake to you in Horeb; lest ye corrupt yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, and make the similitude of any figure; for the Lord thy God is as a consuming fire, even a jealous God*¹. Accordingly we find, that when they had made a golden image, though it was expressly designed in honour of that God who brought them out of *Egypt*, it was, notwithstanding, punished as idolatry. And far from allowing to Christians, what was then forbidden the *Jews*, St. Paul most severely condemns it in the very *Heathens*, that *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man*². Yet how near doth this approach to what the Church of *Rome* doth now, in making pictures of God the Father! Our blessed Saviour indeed, having taken on him human nature, is capable of being represented in a human form. But, as all representations must be imaginary ones, so they are useless ones too: the memorial of himself, which he hath appointed in the Sacrament, we may be assured is sufficient to all good purposes; and these other memorials have always produced absurd and wicked superstitions. As for the images of the saints, it is sufficient to say, that there being no pretence for worshipping the saints themselves, there is yet less pretence for worshipping these representations of them. But there the Church of *Rome* will say we wrong them:

none for 170 years. But *Tarquinius Priscus* introduced them. See *Tenison* on *Idol*. p. 59.

¹ Deut. iv. 15. 21.

² Rom. i. 21. 23.

they do not worship images, but only Christ and his saints by these images. But indeed, it is they who wrong themselves then. For not a few of their own writers¹ frankly own they do worship images, and with the same degree of worship that they pay to the persons whose images they are. And for the cross, particularly in their public offices, they expressly declare themselves to adore it, and, in plain words, petition it in one of their hymns, *to give increase of grace to the righteous, and pardon to the guilty*. This they say is a poetical licence; and truly, in so serious a thing as worship, no small one. But farther: had they no regard to the image, but only to the persons represented, why is an image in one place looked upon to have so much more power and virtue, than an image of the same person in another place? Why hath that of our lady of *Loretto*, for instance, so much more honour done it, than that of our lady any where else? We own the council of *Trent* does give a caution, that no divinity be ascribed to images, nor any trust put in them; and the *Heathen* gave the like caution often with respect to theirs: but this never hinders the Scripture from condemning them as idolaters. And the reason is, that such cautions never are, or can be observed by the multitude. Place sensible objects before them to direct their worship to: and in those objects their worship will terminate. This the primitive Christians saw too plainly in the *Heathens*, ever to think of imitating them. Accordingly, neither images nor pictures were allowed in Churches for near four hundred years. And when, after being

¹ *Aquinas*, &c. See *Trapp*, Ch. of England defended, p. 219. They put in the *Index Exp.* those passages in marginal notes and indexes, that say the contrary. See instances, *ib.* p. 234. They are to be worshipped, says *Bellarmino*, *ita ut ipsa terminent venerationem, ut in se considerantur et non solum ut vicem gerunt exemplaris*: so that the worship rests in them; as they are considered in themselves, and not only as they supply the place of a copy. *Bellarmino. de Imag.* l. ii. c. 21. ap. *Vitr.* in *Is.* xliv. 20.

more than once condemned, they came to be allowed, no honour was intended to be paid to them. On the contrary, when it began to be paid, which indeed was not long, it was severely censured, and particularly in the eighth century, by above three hundred bishops, assembled in council at *Constantinople*. But about thirty years after, the second council of *Nice* (so ill did councils agree) established it. Yet even this council held representations of *God* to be unlawful. And all the western countries, except *Italy*, under the pope's immediate direction, continued to condemn the *worship* of *all* representations, for some ages afterwards. But by degrees it first became general; and then so grossly scandalous, that the Church of *Rome*, it seems, hath judged it the wisest way to leave the second commandment, which too plainly forbids these things, out of their smaller books of devotion, under the absurd pretence of its being only a part, I suppose an insignificant one, of the first; though, since they have been charged with this, they have thought fit in some of them, but not in all, to restore it again. And here let us quit the article of image-worship, with the Psalmist's remark upon it: *They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord*¹.

CHAPTER IV.

The Doctrine of Transubstantiation shown to be absurd and false.

THERE still remains another object of *Popish* worship, the sacramental bread and wine. For they have made it an article of faith, that the substance of these is, by the words of consecration, entirely changed into the substance of the living body and blood of *Christ*; which change, therefore, they call *Transubstantiation*.

¹ Psalm cxv. 8, 9.

Now, were this really the body of Christ; it is allowed we have no command to worship it under this disguise, and therefore commit no sin in letting such worship alone. But if it be really not so, they own themselves to pay that honour to a bit of bread, which belongs only to the eternal Son of God. And surely one should think it a question easily decided, whether a small wafer, which is the bread they use on these occasions, be the body of a man, and whether wine in a cup be blood. Almost every one of our senses will tell us it is not; and though, in some hasty or distant appearances of things, our senses may be deceived, yet, if, where there is all possible opportunity of examining the matter, we cannot be sure of what our own eyes and our own feeling, our smelling and tasting, all-inform us of, then we can be sure of nothing. It is only by such evidence that we know any thing in this world: it is by no other that we know we have a revelation from God, and that this sacrament is appointed in it. If, therefore, we are not to believe our senses, how are we to believe any thing at all? But indeed what they tell us in this case, is as contrary to all reason as it is to all sense. That a human body in its full dimensions should be contained in the space of an inch or two, looks as like a contradiction as any thing well can do; that the substance of bread should not be in the sacrament, where they own all the properties of bread are, and that the substance of flesh should be there, and not one of the properties of it appear, is very monstrous; and that the very same body of Christ, which is now in heaven at the right hand of God, should at the same time be on earth in the right hand of the priest; and that there should be several thousands of those bodies upon earth at many hundreds of miles distance from one another, and yet all these be that very same one body also, this is such talk, that for sober persons in their sober senses to use it, and keep their countenance, is very strange.

If one and one be two, then one body of Christ here, and one body of Christ there, make two bodies of Christ, which they own he hath not. And if one body can be in more than one place at one time, we may all of us perhaps be now this very instant, at *Rome* as well as here: a man may be at ever so many thousand miles distance from himself, and afterwards he may come and meet himself (as two of their pretended real bodies of Christ often do); and then pass by himself and go away from himself to the same distance he was at before: he may in one place be standing still, in another be carried along, and so be in motion and not in motion at the same time. Men may say such things as these if they will: and they may believe them if they can. But in order to do it, well do they direct their poor people to profess in their *English* manual of prayers before mass, 1725, p. 409, *Herein I utterly renounce the judgment of my senses, and all human understanding.*

Here therefore we fix our foot: if these things be to every man living evidently absurd and impossible, then let nobody ever regard the most specious pretences of proving such doctrines, or the authority of a church that maintains them. It is no hard matter for an artful man, a little practised in disputing, so to confound a plain man upon almost any subject, that he shall not well know how to answer, though he sees himself to be right, and the other wrong. This is an art which the priests of the Church of *Rome* are well versed in. Indeed the chief part of their learning is to puzzle themselves first, and as many others as they can afterwards. But always observe this rule: stick to common sense against the world: and whenever a man would persuade you of any thing evidently contrary to that, never be moved by any tricks and fetches of sophistry, let him use ever so many. He will be for proving to you by round-about arguments, of which you are unqualified to judge, that his Church is

infallible, and therefore transubstantiation is true. Do you answer him by a much plainer argument, of which you are very well qualified to judge: that transubstantiation cannot possibly be true, and therefore his Church is not infallible.

But they plead; with God all things are possible, and therefore this is so. Now we own that all things which are not impossible in themselves, are possible with him: but God himself cannot do what in his own nature cannot be done. For instance, he cannot destroy his own being, he cannot cease to be just and good, because this hath a contradiction in it; and for the same reason he cannot do any thing else that hath a contradiction in it; for that would be doing a thing, and at the same time not doing it: to ascribe which to God is not to magnify, but mock his power.

But they say further, that transubstantiation hath no more difficulty than the Trinity hath. But surely the difference is very visible. The doctrine of the Trinity is indeed a mystery; that is, the whole of the subject cannot be fully understood by us. But in transubstantiation there is no mystery at all. For the most evident falsehoods are just as clearly understood to be so as the most evident truths. In the Trinity there is nothing we see to be false; only we do not see the particular manner in which some things said concerning it are true; but in transubstantiation there are many things we see to be false, and which can in no manner be true. Let them show us any contradiction in the doctrine of the Trinity, and we will believe it no longer. In the mean time, since we have shown contradiction in transubstantiation, let *them* believe *that* no longer.

But they have Scripture to plead for it. Now if this were a doctrine of Scripture, it would sooner prove Scripture to be false, than Scripture could prove it to be true; and therefore the Papists, by

making such a monstrous absurdity an article of faith, have loaded their religion with a weight, which, did it belong to Christianity, were able to sink it. But God be thanked, Scripture is no more on their side than reason. We know indeed that our Saviour said, when he gave the sacrament: *This is my body*; But so at another time he said, *Verily, verily, I am the door of the sheep*: And at a third, *I am the vine*. And so have all mankind always called a representation of any thing by the name of what is represented. Why then is he not to be understood in the same figure here? How do we think the Apostles understood him, but as they were used to do in such cases? They who were so backward at comprehending difficult things, and so ready to ask questions about them, did they without any surprise or any question apprehend that our Saviour then took his own body in his own hand, and gave that one body to each of his twelve Apostles at the same time, and that each of them swallowed him down their throats, though he was all the while sitting at the table along with them? Such things are too ridiculous to be mentioned in a serious place, and yet these men force us to it by gravely requiring us to believe them. The only considerable passage besides, that they plead, is in the sixth chapter of *St. John*; where, many *Jews* having followed our Saviour, because he had fed them with the miracle of the loaves, he bids them *labour not for the meat which perisheth, but that which endureth unto everlasting life, which he would give them, who is the true bread from heaven*. Now were this meant of the sacrament, and to be understood literally, we must conclude not bread turned into Christ's body, but his body turned into bread, which is quite the contrary to what they hold. But indeed the whole is only a figurative way of saying, that the souls of all men receive from the

fruits of his death a much more valuable nourishment, than their bodies receive from their daily food. Just as he elsewhere says', *Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life*; which nobody understood literally: and just as Wisdom speaks of herself in *Eccles. xxiv. 21. They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty*; that is, they who have tasted the pleasures and benefits of virtue, will always desire a still greater experience of them. But the *Jews*, with their usual perverseness, cavilling at these words of our Saviour's, he goes on very strongly to assert the propriety of them, that *his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, that he who eateth the one, and drinketh the other, dwelleth in him and liveth by him, but he that doth not, hath no life in him*. But now these words being spoken, you see, concerning the present time, *my flesh is meat indeed*, and so on, cannot principally relate to the sacrament; for there was yet no such thing, nor till a year or two after. Besides, it is not true that he, and he only, who eateth the sacrament, shall dwell in Christ and live by him. For persons may possibly have no opportunity of receiving the sacrament, and yet be very good Christians: and too many receive it frequently, and yet are very bad Christians. The meaning therefore plainly is, that our Saviour's coming and suffering in the flesh, and shedding his blood for mankind, is the spiritual life of the world: that whoever imbibes the doctrine he taught in his life, and partakes by faith of the benefits he procured at his death, his soul is inwardly strengthened by them, and shall be finally preserved to a happy immortality. For in this spiritual and figurative sense, he immediately directs his disciples to understand his words: when misunderstanding them in a gross and literal one had somewhat stag-

¹ John iv. 14.

gered them. *Doth this, says he, offend you? It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.* His manner of expression had the same intent with that passage of St. Paul¹, where he says, *the Israelites did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.* The Papists themselves do not think from hence, that the Jews did eat and drink Christ literally: and Christians do it in the same manner they did, only with a clearer and more distinct faith. For in this spiritual sense, Christ himself explains his words. We firmly believe *his body and blood to be verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper*; that is, an union with him to be not only represented, but really and effectually communicated to the worthy receiver. But as for any other sense, if we did, or could do so monstrous a thing, as literally to eat the flesh, and drink the blood of our dear Lord, it is not that which could do our souls any good, but only his grace accompanying this sacrament: which may as well accompany it without any change of the bread and wine, as it accompanies that of baptism, without any change of water.

We see then that Scripture by no means favours transubstantiation. It is indeed express against it:

St. Paul more than once tells us, that what we in the sacrament is *bread*, and as for what we eat, when our Saviour says, *this is my blood which is shed for you*, if he had meant literally, he had spoken falsely; for his blood was not shed till afterwards, and could not be drunk then. Neither is it in a condition of being shed at present, and therefore cannot be drunk now. But too much hath been said of this monstrous doctrine, to which the insinuation of well-meaning writers gave the first

¹ 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.

occasion pretty early, whilst they affected to heighten the figurative expressions of Scripture, by still more figurative ones of their own: little thinking at the same time, that such an absurd meaning, as the Papists now plead for, could ever be ascribed to them; and plainly showing, by innumerable proofs, that it is unjustly ascribed to them. But as ignorance and superstition increased, about eight hundred years after Christ, this amazing notion began to be distinctly and explicitly entertained and asserted, which some had the good sense to oppose: some the weakness to receive, as a mystery that promoted the reverence of the sacrament; others the wickedness to support with zeal, as an artifice that increased the authority of the priests; for what could he not do, who, as they blasphemously express it, could make God? By degrees then this doctrine prevailed, till, in the thirteenth century, it was established as an article of faith. And when once the speculative error of believing the consecrated bread and wine to be literally the body and blood of Christ, obtained, the practical one of worshipping them, as such, quickly followed. For though a decent respect was always paid to the sacrament, yet a direct adoration to the elements was never paid, till the dark and superstitious ages above mentioned introduced so senseless an idolatry to the infinite scandal of religion. May God, who mercifully winked at the times of heathen ignorance, overlook this less excusable folly of Christians, and *forgive them, for they know not what they do.* But let us all remember, that our case will be much worse than theirs, if, after the light hath so clearly shone upon us, we return to darkness again: if, as the Apostle expresses it, *we change the truth of God into a lie, and worship the creature instead of the Creator, who is blessed for evermore*¹. Amen.

¹ Rom. i. 25.

CHAPTER V.

The Administration of the Lord's Supper in one Kind only to the Laity condemned.

I now proceed to another peculiarity of the *Romanists*, with respect to the sacrament, withholding the cup from the laity. That our Saviour administered the holy eucharist in both kinds, they acknowledge: nay, that he expressly commanded those, to whom he administered it, that they should *all drink of that cup*. What, therefore, he commands all to do, why do they forbid all but the priest to do? Why; the Apostles, they say, were commanded to take the cup as well as the bread, because they were clergy. But the Church of *Rome* forbids even the clergy, excepting those who officiate, to take it. Besides, if the command of receiving the *cup*, relates only to the clergy, that of receiving the *bread* too, must relate only to the clergy: for there is no manner of distinction made in the Gospel. Yet they own the laity are obliged by our Saviour's command to receive the bread and therefore they are obliged by the same command, to receive the cup: which that they did accordingly, the eleventh chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians* makes as plain as words can make any thing. Not to say further, that if the sixth of St. *John* relate immediately to the sacrament, as they are sometimes very positive it doth, the fifty-third verse of that chapter expressly declares, that unless we *drink the blood of the Son of Man*, as well as *eat his flesh*, we have no life in us. But they tell us, our Saviour himself, after his resurrection, administered the sacrament in one kind only. For St. *Luke* says, that sitting down to eat with the two disciples at *Emmaus*, he took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to them: and upon their

knowing him, *vanished out of their sight*¹. Now it happens, that this was not administering the sacrament at all, but doing just the same thing, which the Evangelists in just the same words tells us he did, when he fed the multitudes with the loaves and fishes; and indeed at every meal he eat. For the *Jews* in the beginning of every meal of theirs, use the very same custom to this day². But they further plead, that however that be, at least when in the Acts of the Apostles it is said, the *disciples met together to break bread on the first day of the week*³: This must be the sacrament; and the cup is not once mentioned there as given. We answer, 'tis not certain that even this was the sacrament; and supposing it was, as in Scripture language, common feasts are expressed by the single phrase of eating bread, which yet surely does not prove, that the guests drank nothing, so neither is it proved, by a religious feast being expressed in the same manner. And besides, if there is no mention there of the laity's receiving the cup, there is none of the priests' receiving it neither; yet this they think absolutely necessary; and if one may be taken for granted, without being mentioned, the other may. Nor should it be forgotten on this occasion, that as the phrase of eating sometimes comprehends the whole of this action, so doth that of drinking; *we have all been made to drink into one spirit*, says the Apostle⁴; who hence proves the unity of all Christians, and therefore certainly thought it was the right of all Christians⁵. But they plead further, that the laity by receiving the body of Christ, receive his blood also: for the blood is contained in the body. But here they quite forget, that our Saviour hath appointed this sacrament to be received for a memorial of his blood

¹ Luke xxiv. 30, 31. ² Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. 12. ³ Acts xx. 7.

⁴ 1 Cor. xii. 13. ⁵ Clagget, Vol. I. Sermon. x. p. 266.

being shed out of his body, of which, they who receive not the cup, do not make the memorial which he commanded, when he said, *drink ye all of this*. Still they insist, that there being no particular virtue or benefit annexed to this part of the sacrament that they withhold, which does not belong to the other, 'tis no manner of loss to the laity to omit of it. Now does not the same reason prove equally, that the clergy may omit it too? But besides, what treatment of our blessed Lord is this, when he hath appointed all Christians to perform a solemn act of religion, consisting of two parts, both with equal strictness enjoined; for the Church of *Rome* to say that one of them, the far greatest part of Christians shall not perform, for it is full as well let alone: nay better indeed, if we believe them; for the cup they tell us, may be drank of immoderately, may be spilled; many dreadful inconveniences may happen from trusting it with the laity? Now 'tis strange our Saviour should not be wise enough to foresee these inconveniences: 'tis strange he should not experience them neither: and it adds to the wonder not a little, that the whole Church of Christ, for twelve hundred years, should not be able to find them out any more than we. For in all that time, the cup was constantly given to the laity in the public communions, though there are some instances, yet neither many, nor early ones, in which the bread alone was carried to private houses. And when some of the laity, for absurd reasons, refused to take the cup, no less than three popes condemned them. But superstitious imaginations gradually increasing amongst Christians, a custom arose first of giving the bread dipped in wine instead of both separate; and at last, in the fifteenth century, the council of *Constance*, the same which decreed so honestly, that promises made to the prejudice of the Catholic faith ought not to be kept¹, decreed also very modestly, that notwith-

¹ See *Courayer's* Council of Trent, Vol. I. p. 595.

standing (for so they express it) our Saviour ministered both kinds, one only shall be administered for the future to the laity. And now it is made an article of their creed, that the whole sacrament is given by giving this part: so that whoever shall say both are necessary, (which, if it be not a truth, one should think could not be a heresy) is by the council of *Trent* pronounced accursed.

CHAPTER VI.

On the Sacrifice of the Mass, auricular Confession, and private Absolution.

ANOTHER difference between the Church of *Rome* and ours with respect to the sacrament is this. They hold that as often as it is celebrated, Christ is truly and properly offered up a sacrifice for our sins. Now we acknowledge, that every act of obedience, and of worship more especially, may, agreeably to the language of Scripture, be spoken of as a sacrifice to our Maker: that his creatures of bread and wine, when appropriated to this solemn act of religion, are so far offerings to God; and that this whole act, being a memorial and representation of the sacrifice of Christ, may fitly enough be called by the same name with what it commemorates and represents; so that in this sense Christians have an altar and an offering upon it. But that, instead of a representative sacrifice of praise, it should be a real sacrifice and atonement, in which Christ's body, literally speaking, is every day offered up anew, of this we can see neither proof nor possibility. For not only it supposes transubstantiation to be true, which hath been proved to be false; but it is absolutely inconsistent with two whole chapters of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the ninth and tenth; which throughout inculcate that *Christ was not to be offered up often,*

for then must he often have suffered; but that he appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; was once offered to bear the sins of many; and by this one offering hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified. If therefore our doctrine be heretical in this point, St. Paul's is so too; not to speak of the primitive Christians, who, though they often called this ordinance a sacrifice, yet, by calling it an unbloody one, show they did not think the blood of Christ was literally offered up in it; and by frequently saying they had indeed no sacrifices, prove themselves to look on this only as a figurative one.

But now from this notion of a daily atonement thus made, I shall proceed to their other doctrines concerning the forgiveness of sins. And here they hold that a particular absolution from a priest is necessary, if it can be had, for the pardon of every mortal sin, *i. e.* every sin by which any person without repentance forfeits his title to heaven; and that a particular confession of every material circumstance of every such sin is necessary for absolution. And the practice of these they apprehend to give their Church an unspeakable advantage over ours.

The necessity of such absolution they plead for from our Saviour's words to his Apostles: *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*¹. *Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained*². Now certainly these words did not put it in the power of the Apostles themselves, to pardon or refuse to pardon whom they pleased, right or wrong. They could use the keys of the kingdom of heaven no further, than he saw fit, who *openeth, and no man shutteth: who shutteth, and no man openeth*³. Yet the Apostles had great powers by virtue of these words, which we have not; the

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18.² John xx. 23.³ Rev. iii. 7.

power of discerning by the Spirit, in many cases at least, and therefore of declaring, who were penitent and pardoned, who otherwise; the power of inflicting and continuing miraculous punishments on wicked persons, which is *binding and retaining* their sins; and of removing such punishments, which is *loosing and remitting* them. But these things the *Romish* clergy can no more claim than we. What then besides can there be conveyed by these words of our Lord? A power of preaching the Gospel, according to the terms of which alone, the sins of men shall be forgiven or punished; a power of admitting persons into a state of forgiveness by baptism, of administering to them the word of God and the holy sacrament, as means of grace; of denouncing his wrath against all sinners, interceding with him for all penitents, and pronouncing in his name that he pardons and absolves them. These things, we trust, are done much more faithfully by us than them. There is indeed another power of exercising spiritual discipline, for the honour of the Church and the sake of example, to distinguish so far as men are able between the good, by admitting them to communion with us, and the bad, by excluding them from it. In this we acknowledge that we are deficient: but they are worse: for they have utterly perverted it from a public institution of general use and influence, to a secret transaction between a sinner and his confessor, in which not only such absolution is made necessary, as the Scripture hath no where required, but such confession insisted on as is no way needful to it. Not needful from any command of God; for the chief and almost only text they plead for that purpose, *Confess your faults one to another*¹, no more obliges the people in all cases to reveal the particulars of their sins to the priests, than the priest to reveal the particulars of his to the people. Nor

¹ James v. 16.

is it needful from the nature of the thing; for it is not knowing a person's sins that can qualify the priest to give him absolution, but knowing he hath repented of them; which is just as possible to be known without a particular confession, as with it. Still in many cases acknowledging the errors of our lives, and opening the state of our souls to the ministers of God's word, for their opinion, their advice, and their prayers, may be extremely useful, sometimes necessary. And whenever persons think it so we are ready both to hear them with the utmost secrecy, and to assist them with our best care; to direct them how they may be forgiven, if we think they are not; to pronounce them forgiven, if we think they are. Only we must beg them to remember, that none but God can pardon sins as to their consequences in another world. Men indeed may take off from sinners the censures of the Church, if they have incurred them; but as to any thing farther, all we can do is, either to pray to God that he would forgive them, (which was the only form of absolution till the eleventh century at least) or else to declare that he hath done so. And let such a declaration declare ever so positively that either God or the priest absolves them, it is a fatal error to build hopes on this with respect to another life, any further than conditionally, that if their repentance be sufficient, their forgiveness is certain. But whether it be sufficient or no, the priests of our Church can give their judgment, and those of the Church of *Rome* can possibly do no more. For they must own themselves to be as fallible as we are.

But as neither reason nor Scripture makes confession and absolution of this kind necessary, so neither did the primitive Church hold it to be so. Public confession indeed they required in cases of public scandal; but for private confession in all cases, it was never thought of as a command of God for nine hundred years after Christ; nor determined

to be such till after 1200 ; when the same council of *Lateran* decreed it, which decreed also the deposing of such princes as would not extirpate heresy. And yet it is amazing, what stress they now lay upon it. No repentance, they tell us, will avail if it be neglected ; and almost any will do, if it be observed. For let a dying sinner have only what they call attrition, such a sorrow as arises merely from the fear of being punished, without the least degree of dislike to sin or love to God, this sorrow, though not sufficient without absolution, yet, with it, is. So that if a person who has disregarded God all his life, can but be made afraid of him at his death, the priest shall deliver him from hell, and secure heaven to him, by a word speaking. Some lesser punishments indeed he doth remain subject to first ; as to which however there are ways of making matters as easy as can well be wished. But in order to understand them, another head of *Popish* doctrine must be explained.

CHAPTER VII.

On Purgatory.

OUR Saviour, the *Romanists* tell us, having procured for repenting sinners the forgiveness only of the eternal punishment due to their sins, there remains a temporal punishment due to them still, which if it be not in this life either inflicted by worldly sufferings, or satisfied for by good works and penances, must be undergone after death, in the pains of a place called *Purgatory* : which pains may, however, be mitigated and shortened, partly by offering up prayers for such persons, and partly by granting indulgences to them. And these things also we are heretics for not believing. Yet for the necessity of our believing these doctrines, they pretend no Scripture proof, and they have no proof for so much as the truth of them. Heaven and Hell we read of perpetually in the Bible, but Purgatory we never meet with ; though surely, if there be such

a place, Christ and his Apostles would not have concealed it from us. St. Paul indeed mentions a *fire that tries every man's works, and persons that shall be saved, yet so as by fire*¹. But what is he there speaking of? He had been laying amongst them, he says, the foundation of religion, the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ. *On this*, says he, *another man hath built: but let every one take heed how he buildeth; what he teaches for Christian doctrine; for the day shall declare it, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is: either the day of the fiery trial of persecution, or rather, the final judgment of God, whose day shall burn like an oven*², this shall try every man's work, search it as thoroughly as fire does things that are put into it. Then, *if any man's work, which he hath built, abide, if the doctrines he hath taught bear the test, he shall receive a reward: but if his work be burnt*, if, preserving the fundamentals of Christianity, he hath built errors on them, *he shall suffer loss*; the pains he hath taken shall be of no benefit, and though he may be saved himself, it shall be like one that escapes through the fire, with great danger and difficulty. For so St. Jude speaks: *some save with fear, pulling out of the fire*³: and the prophet Amos, *Ye were as a fire-brand plucked out of the burning*⁴. This passage therefore relates not to punishing, in purgatory, the persons of some men, before the day of judgment, but to trying the works of all men at the day of judgment: and, far from patronizing the Church of Rome, gives them indeed an awful warning *not to build on the foundation of Christianity hay and stubble*; such useless trash as this, and many other of their doctrines, which the great day of the Lord will show to have no solidity in them: but *their works shall be burnt up, themselves suffer loss, and at best be saved only so as by fire*. Their other

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 13. 15.² Jude 23.³ Mal. iv. 1.⁴ Amos iv. 11.

texts for purgatory are, if possible, less to the purpose than this; that *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, either in this life, or that to come*¹; which is only saying, it shall never be forgiven, but punished both here and hereafter: that he who *agrees not with his adversary in the way, shall be cast by the judge into prison, and not come out till he hath paid the uttermost farthing*²; which perhaps is only saying, that whoever doth not make up a difference with his neighbour before trial, must expect no favour after: or, if God be the judge meant, the sense will be, that the person condemned shall never come out of prison, because he never can *pay the uttermost farthing*. For uncharitableness unrepented of, which is the crime here mentioned, the Papists themselves own, sends men not to purgatory, but to hell. As for this notion, that our Saviour hath not procured forgiveness of the temporal punishment of sin, it is certain from Scripture that he hath procured the forgiveness of every thing that can properly be called punishment. For *his blood cleanseth us from all sin*³; and therefore no purgatory is needful. And *there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*⁴, and consequently no such place to be condemned to. Correction indeed there is; but this correction is the work, not of an offended judge, but a merciful Father: and as he, by these and many other means, endeavours to amend us, so we should use all proper means to amend ourselves: but such penances as tend only to give pain, are not proper means, even in this life, which is our only time of amendment; much less will any such be inflicted on good men in the other, when they will come too late for any valuable purpose. *Blessed, says the angel, are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth, from the hour of their death, for they rest from their la-*

¹ Matt. xii. 32.² 1 John i. 7.³ Matt. v. 25, 26.⁴ Rom. viii. 1.

bours¹. But miserable, says the Church of *Rome*, are many of the dead that die in the Lord, for a long time after, for they rest not from their labours, but labour under most grievous sufferings. But indeed, even their own apocryphal Scriptures might have taught them better than this. *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them*². Nor is there plea from antiquity better than that from Scripture. For though many had adopted strange notions of these things, out of heathen fable and philosophy, into the Christian religion, yet purgatory, in the present Popish sense, was not heard of for 400 years after Christ; nor universally received, even in the western churches, for 1000 years; nor almost in an other church than that of *Rome*, to this day. But supposing there were such a place, how do they know, concerning any particular person, that he ever comes into it, or how long he stays in it! And if not, what is it but *offering the sacrifice of fools*³, to make thousands of prayers for one, who may be quite out of the reach of them, either in heaven, or perhaps in hell? Though indeed, by praying for the very wickedest of men, as only in purgatory, they strongly tempt other wicked men to conclude, that none of their communion ever go to hell. And thus is this invention at once so great a terror to good persons, and so great a comfort to bad ones, that one cannot help applying to it the Prophet's words: *With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life*⁴. But were they to pray not for particular persons, as they do, but only in general for all that are there: where is then the command, where is even the permission for it? Our brethren on earth we pray for, because

¹ Rev. xiv. 13.

² Eccles. v. 1.

³ Wind. iii. 1.

⁴ Ezek. xiii. 22.

the time of their trial is not yet over. But the state of the dead is fixed, and they shall receive, every man, not according to our prayers, but their own past works. Purgatory, they tell us, is that prison whence men shall not come out *till they have paid the last farthing*: and what room is there then for our prayers for them there? We own, indeed, some sort of prayers for the dead were used by the Church (though without any warrant for them that appears) very early, within 200 years after Christ. But then originally these were made, not for souls in purgatory, for whom the Papists pray, but for saints in *Paradise*, for whom they do not pray; for all righteous persons deceased, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, even for the blessed Virgin herself; and hence it appears by the way, that they did not pray to these since they prayed for them. And the subject-matter of their prayers was, that God would grant them his promised mercy in the day of judgment, and speedily complete their happiness in body and soul. In process of time, it must be owned, men fell into a variety of groundless superstitions, concerning the state of Christians between death and the resurrection; and upon these superstitions they formed their prayers, which many persons went so far as to imagine could benefit even sinners in hell. But as all these suppositions, for a long time were different from, and inconsistent with, the *Romish* notions of purgatory, so the prayers which the ancients used for the dead, even were they of authority, (which they are not, for nothing is so but what appears to come from God) would condemn, and not justify those prayers which the Papists use.

CHAPTER VIII.

On the Doctrine of Indulgences.

ANOTHER Popish method of relieving sinners is by indulgences. Originally this word meant a very

right thing, the mitigation of the severity or length of ecclesiastical censures towards such, as, by an exemplary repentance, had deserved it. Nor was any other sort of indulgences known for at least 600 years, perhaps much longer. But the present notion of the Church of *Rome* about them, (though in their disputes with us they would fain disguise it if they could) is this. Many of the saints, it seems, have not only done enough to merit immediate entrance into heaven, but more than was necessary for that purpose, this overplus of their goodness, called usually works of supererogation, joined with the infinite merits of Christ, makes a treasure of inestimable value, which the Church hath the disposal of, and the Pope, as head of the Church, applies towards the remission of their sins, who either fulfil, in their life-time, certain conditions appointed by him, or whose friends will fulfil them after their deaths. Now we, on the contrary, have learned from Scripture, that in many things the best of us all offend; that were our obedience perfect, it were no more than our duty; and that, to the grace of God, not to the merit of our works, the salvation of our souls is owing. In some respects, indeed, in useless mortifications and observances of no value, we acknowledge many saints of their church have done much more than God requires, much more than he approves or will reward. But even had they done more really good things than they were obliged to, this might indeed increase their own happiness in another world: but what pretence is there for affirming, that instead of that it shall be transferred away to the benefit of others; and those others, just whomsoever the Pope shall please? This sure is very hard. But, after all, what is the benefit conferred by these indulgences? If it be only deliverance, either wholly, or in part, from purgatory, there is no such place to be delivered from. And that it is from hell, they dare not say indeed,

but they do every thing that can make the ignorant think it. Why else are Christ's merits mentioned as one ground of indulgences? For he hath not merited, they tell us, deliverance from temporary punishments, as purgatory is, but from eternal ones only. Why also do their indulgences declare themselves to bestow the most full remission and forgiveness of all sins, if they mean only the smallest part of forgiveness? These things are too plainly calculated to deceive poor wretches into a fatal belief, that by such methods, wickedness here may become consistent with happiness hereafter. Repentance indeed is, in words, made one condition of obtaining these indulgences; but this is easily explained away or overlooked amongst the others joined with it, of saying so many prayers, going to so many processions, and paying so much money. Nay, if their own historians are to be credited, the inhabitants of whole cities at once, upon visiting certain churches, and paying a certain sum, have, before now, been absolved of all their sins by the Pope, with these very words added: *Even though they had not been contrite for them, nor confessed them.* But, as the Reformation was first brought on by the enormities of indulgences, so, since the Reformation, they have in many places, both in this and other respects, greatly moderated their practices, though they have never effectually disclaimed their principles. And indeed, as angry as they are with that happy event, they have great reason to be thankful for it, on account of several changes for the better, which it has produced amongst them; especially where part of any country have been Protestants. For elsewhere all their abuses are kept up. And for one proof of it, I have now in my custody a plenary indulgence, granted for a small piece of gold, at Rome, this very year¹, to an absolute stranger, for himself, for his

¹ 1745.

kindred, to the third degree, and to thirty persons more, for whose names a proper blank is left in the instrument. So that had not the reformation given them some check, God knows whether, by this time, Christianity had been discoverable under the changes and disguises which the prevailing part of them would have deformed it with. Consider but to what lengths matters had already gone, in this one article of the remission of sins. The necessity of confession puts the secrets of every man's heart and life into the breast of the priest, and the power of admitting into heaven, or excluding from it, forced the bigotted sinner to do whatever should be enjoined him. In how monstrous a manner this power was used, the history of all nations dreadfully shows. And then to preserve it from growing quite intolerable, an artifice was added, that made it still more fatal. It is too well known, that mankind will do any thing rather than their duty, and part with any thing sooner than their vices. On the terms, therefore, of submitting in other points, they were made easy in this favourite one. The strictest rules of life, indeed, were laid down for such as thought themselves bound to be strict; but for those who desired to be otherwise, superstitious observances were allowed to take place of real duties; idle penances to stand instead of true repentance and reformation: without a zeal for such follies as these, the best man was reckoned to have but a small hope of future happiness; and with a zeal for the notions and interests of holy Church, the worst man was easily secured from future misery. Absolution, if he were but ever so little sorry for having been a sinner, would set him clear at once from hell; and, if he had but either time to perform a few silly devotions and mortifications while he lived, or money to purchase a good many prayers for him when he died, his confinement in purgatory must soon be over: and thus was the necessity of a holy life quite

taken away, and the Gospel of Christ altogether made void. Far be it from us of this Church, to affright you with such vain terrors, or deceive you with such vain hopes. On the contrary, be assured, that were all the priests on earth to refuse absolving a true penitent, it would never hurt him: and were they all to join in absolving a man that hath not repented as the Gospel requires, it would do him no good. Be assured that no equivalent in the world will be accepted instead of true inward piety, nor all the good works of all the saints in heaven, compensate, in the least degree, for the want of good works in any one man on earth. Never be moved then by the most confident pretences of this kind, but know, for a certainty, that whoever flies for refuge from his sins, to those who will flatter him with such wretched expedients as these, instead of mending his condition by trusting to them, only makes it worse, and more desperate than it was before. The words of God in the case of the *Israelites*, are just as applicable in this: *Because ye have said, we have made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at agreement: when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore thus saith the Lord God—Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be trodden down by it. Judgment will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place¹.*

CHAPTER IX.

Extreme Unction.

SEVERAL notions of the Roman Catholics concerning the pardon of sin I have mentioned and confuted: but

¹ Isa. xxviii. 15. 17, 18.

still there remains one more to be spoken of: their custom, when a sick person is near death, of anointing his eyes, and ears, and nostrils, and mouth, and hands, sometimes also his feet, and reins, with oil consecrated by the bishop, and praying that in virtue of that anointing, the sins which he hath committed, by the several organs of his body, may be forgiven him. This they call *Extreme Unction*; or the sacrament of dying persons: and teach, that besides forgiveness of sins, it gives composure and strength of mind to go through the agonies of death. All this they build wholly on the following passage of St. James. *Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him*¹. But a little consideration will show that what St. James appoints is very different from what the Church of Rome does. In those days miraculous gifts were common: that of healing diseases in particular: and the persons who had these gifts were usually the elders of the churches, whom the apostle here directs to be sent for. And as miracles in condescension to the genius of the Jewish people, to whom this epistle is directed, were accompanied, for the most part, with some outward act of ceremony, by the performer of them; (a practice which our Saviour himself often complied with;) so the ceremony used in healing the sick by miracles, viz. anointing them with oil, was one to which the Jews had been accustomed; oil being a thing of which much use was made in the eastern countries, on many occasions². Accordingly we read, that when our

¹ James v. 14, 15.

See *Wheatley*, on the Office for the Sick. And *Grotius* on Mark l. says, the Jews used it when they prayed for the sick, to express hope of obtaining from God, in their behalf, that joy and gladness which signifies. *Preservative against Popery*, Tit. vii. c. ii. § 4. p.

Saviour sent out his disciples with a power from heaven to cure diseases, though he prescribed to them no particular form for that purpose, yet they adopted this: *they anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them*¹. Now what the Evangelist tells us they did, is evidently the very thing which St. James directs the elders of the church to do. And therefore, since the anointing mentioned in the Gospel was only a mere circumstance used in miraculous cures; that also mentioned in the Epistles can be nothing more. Accordingly we find St. James neither appoints any consecration of the oil, nor ascribes any efficacy to it, as the Papists do: but says, *The prayer of faith shall save the sick*. Now if this means only prayer offered up in a general faith of God's providence, we use it for the sick, as well as they, and may hope for the same good effect from it. But faith, in many places of Scripture, signifies that supernatural persuasion and feeling of a power to work miracles, which in those days was frequent. Thus St. Paul says, *Though I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains*², &c. And therefore *the prayer of faith*, since it is so absolutely promised here that it *shall save the sick*, probably means a prayer proceeding from this extraordinary persuasion and impulse: such a one as, in the next verse, we translate an *effectual fervent prayer*, but should translate an *inwrought or inspired prayer*. And therefore unless, in the Church of Rome, the priest, as often as he administers extreme unction, acts and prays by immediate inspiration, his prayers are not of the sort St. James speaks of: nor are they directed to the same end. The benefit which he promises from the prayers that he appoints, is the recovery of health: *The prayer of faith shall save the*

¹ Mark vi. 13. The council of Trent had at first said, that extreme unction was instituted in this place, but afterwards changed that word for *insinuated*. F. Paul in *Preserv.* p. 64.

² 1 Cor. xiii. 2. See also Matt. xvii. 20. John xiv 12, 13.

sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: whereas they of the Church of Rome never use this ceremony with any hope of recovery, nor, indeed, unless they happen to mistake, till the person is quite past recovery. And, for this reason again, his anointing and theirs are quite different things. For though St. James does add: *And if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him*; yet the very doubt, implied in the word *if*, shows he is not speaking of a sacrament instituted purposely for the remission of sins, as the Church of Rome make their unction to be. And indeed this relates to the very same thing with his former words. For, as bodily sickness and infirmity was frequently a punishment for sin: (whence, to mention no other proof, St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*¹, *for this cause many are weakly and sickly among you, and many sleep*;) so the very form of miraculously healing a person of these infirmities used by our Saviour, is, *Son, thy sins be forgiven thee*²: that is, the illness inflicted on thee for thy sins is removed. Since, therefore, St. James promises forgiveness of sins in just a like case, we are certainly to understand him in just the like sense: *viz.* that, if the sickness of any person prayed for were the punishment of any sin; that punishment should be remitted and his health restored. Now this forgiveness of the temporal punishment of some particular sins, which is what St. James raises, the Church of Rome does not promise from ceremony; and the forgiveness of the future punishment of all those sins, that the sick person hath committed by his bodily organs, which St. James does not promise, they do. Though indeed, it is a little hard to conceive, when all a man's sins have been already forgiven, (as they say they are by the priest's absolution) how any of them should want to be forgiven again, perhaps, by extreme unction, the moment

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 30.

² Matt. ix. 2. See also John v. 14.

after. But the truth is, they themselves lay not near so much stress on this ceremony's procuring pardon of sin, as its procuring composure of mind against the terrors of death. Now, most evidently, this expectation St. *James* hath not said one word to countenance: so that his precept, which seems at first sight to be some ground for their practice, and is the only ground they have, relates, indeed, to a quite different thing, as one of their cardinals, *Cajetan*¹, acknowledges; though the council of *Trent*, Sess. 14. hath thought proper since to curse all that shall say it. The anointing prescribed by St. *James*, therefore, being entirely of a miraculous nature, was in all reason to cease, when miracles were no more. And accordingly the primitive Christians, though they speak more than once of anointing with oil in miraculous cures; yet, in common cases, never mention it as a custom, much less as one appointed in Scripture, for the first six hundred years². After that indeed they came to use it upon all sick persons in the beginning of sickness, for a means of recovery, as the *Greek Church* doth yet; till finding it of little benefit in that way, the *Church of Rome*, about the twelfth century, began to use it, in the extremity of sickness, as a sacrament of preparation for death; which if it were in reality, they are surely much to blame for not giving it under the apprehensions of an approaching violent death; for instance, before a malefactor is executed; where it cannot but be as needful, as in the fears of a natural one. Upon the whole, you see our laying aside a ceremony which hath long been useless, and, by leading persons into superstitious fancies, might be hurtful, can be no manner of loss, whilst every thing that continues truly valuable in St. *James's* direction, is

¹ *Preservative*, Tit. vii. c. 2. § 2. p. 60.

² Concerning the Passage of *Innocent I.* in the beginning of the 5th century, see *Preserv.* p. 75.

preserved in our office for visiting the sick; concerning which I shall only add, that it is much to be wished men would so live in the time of their health, as to need the least spiritual assistance that is possible, in the time of their sickness; and that what they do need, they would all apply for early, when it might be of great benefit to them, and not content themselves with calling in the minister at last for mere form's sake, when he can do them little good, or none.

CHAPTER X.

Prayers in an unknown Tongue.

ANOTHER point, in which we differ from the Church of *Rome*, is, that all their public prayers are in the *Latin* tongue, ours in our own. This sure at least is no heresy, that, when we pray to God, we all know what we say. Our practice justifies itself. But how is theirs justified? Reason and common sense plainly condemn it. Antiquity is no less against them; for every Christian Church originally had their own service in their own tongue. That of the western world was in *Latin*, only because *Latin* was their common language; and, therefore, it should have been no longer in *Latin*, when that ceased to be their common language. And for Scripture, read but the xivth chapter of 1 *Corinthians*, and see what *St. Paul* would have judged of this *Romish* practice. Even when there was a miraculous gift of tongues in the Church, and men prayed, or prophesied, in strange languages by inspiration; even then he requires such persons, to keep silence, unless another were ready to interpret publicly what they spoke? for, says he, *Brethren, except ye utter words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken; for ye shall speak into the air. If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall*

be unto him that speaketh a Barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a Barbarian unto me. How shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say, Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all: yet in the Church, I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. It immediately follows, and very fitly to the present purpose; *Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.* For never sure was greater childishness, than to be satisfied with the mere outward show of prayers to God, perhaps without understanding one word of them, which is not praying at all; nor greater malice, that is, more wicked and cruel cunning, than to keep the poor people in this darkness, and plead for it, with such unfair pretences as they do. Some of them tell us very gravely, that *Latin*, far from being an unknown tongue, is the best known of any in *Europe*. And if it were, yet if this best known tongue is notwithstanding unknown to ninety-nine persons in a hundred, why must they all be confined to it, and not have each their own prayers in their own tongue? Why, that variety would be very inconvenient, they say to travellers. But whose convenience is most to be consulted? That of whole nations, or of a few persons that come amongst them occasionally? but vulgar tongues, they say, are perpetually changing, and expressions growing improper and unintelligible. I answer: our having our Bible and Prayer-book in the vulgar tongue undoubtedly prevents its changing near so fast as it would otherwise. But when it does change, let them, where it is needful, be changed to it. For which is worse, to take this little trouble of altering a few words and phrases once in a hundred years, or to let people go on for ages together, with prayers,

and lessons, of which they understand not one word? But they allege farther, that some of their prayers, indeed a great part of the mass, it would be useless to have said in their own language; for the priest is ordered to speak it so low, that it cannot be heard; as if one fault would excuse another, instead of making it greater. But many of their prayers, they say, may be understood; for though spoken in *Latin*, there are printed translations of them in *English*. But still, great part of them is not translated, unless it be by some very modern indulgence¹; and that which is, nothing but our making them ashamed of themselves hath forced them to of late in these parts of the world against their will. For, we know that when, within this last century, some well-meaning bishops of their own Church in *France* had published the mass in the vulgar tongue, for the people's use; the then Pope declared them sons of perdition to all the world, and condemned what they had done, as if it were the overthrow of religion². So that, for aught we know, the same liberty taken here may fall under the same condemnation, when a proper time comes. Or were the contrary ever so certain, still putting their prayers into *English* for the people, only shows that they ought to be spoken in *English* by the priest; for this round-about way is evidently a most absurd one; that he should be praying in one language, and they following him by guess, as well as they can, in another. Besides, multitudes of their poor people have never heard of these translations, or at least, have them not; multitudes more are unable to read them; and all these must be left quite in the dark. But we are told, they have a good intention in general: they see what they do not understand, and this is

¹ The *English* translator of the order and canon of the mass hath cut many of the ceremonies, particularly above twenty crosses out of more than thirty. *Tension on Idol.* p. 5.

² *Johnson*, Sermon. 246.

sufficient. Now for the purposes of spiritual dominion, this may be sufficient, and such devotions, as many of theirs are, will, we own, be more revered from not being understood. But for the edification of the people, it is far from being sufficient, to have good intentions in general, and no meaning in particular: to pray to God for they know not what; and hear lessons read, which they can learn nothing from.

CHAPTER XI.

Prohibition of the Scriptures.

EVERY Protestant Church allows and exhorts all persons to read the holy Scriptures diligently. The *Romanists*, on the contrary, have expressly declared, that, since the promiscuous allowance of Bibles in the vulgar tongue does more harm than good, (these are the very words of the index published in consequence of the council of *Trent's* order) no one shall be suffered to read translations of Scripture, even though made by Catholics, as they call themselves, unless the bishop or inquisitor, by the advice of the curate or confessor, give him leave in writing; and whoever transgresses this rule, shall not be absolved till he gives up his Bible. Nay, throughout the whole kingdom of *Spain*, all Bibles in their own tongue are absolutely forbidden. And in all popish countries, getting one, by the means here prescribed, being a matter of time, and form, and difficulty, and suspicion, the generality seldom put themselves to the trouble of it. So that in many parts of the world there are great multitudes of that communion, who perhaps have never either read or heard, in their own tongue, one chapter of the Bible in their whole lives. Or if any one does for leave, it is never granted, where they dare use it, excepting to such as they are well assured beforehand will see nothing there but what they are bidden. So that where they have permission to read the Scripture, they have none to understand it.

Besides that, this permission, even in those countries where they are obliged to indulge it the most freely, as in our own, is but during pleasure, and may at any time be taken away when it will serve the turn better: nor dare the poor deluded people, upon pain of damnation, help themselves. And as to Protestant translations, having one is looked on as a mark of heresy; for which, in this very nation, poor creatures have been burnt, and their Bibles with them. Which practice now, think you, is the righter, theirs or ours? What authority can there be on earth to forbid any part of mankind from reading what heaven hath revealed to them? 'Tis the law of our lives, the foundation of our hopes; God hath given it to us, and man hath no right to take it from us. But they tell us, it is from kindness they do it: for there is great danger that the Scripture may be misunderstood and perverted: *unlearned and unstable men*¹, St. Peter hath declared, *may wrest it to their own destruction*. Now this is possible indeed; and so it is possible every thing may be applied to an ill purpose; health, strength, food, liberty, common day-light; but is this a reason for taking away any of them? It is possible that persons may do themselves harm by having the Scriptures; but is it not something more than possible that they may suffer harm from the want of them; and *be destroyed*, as the Prophet tells us, *for lack of knowledge*²? Why do not these persons, who are so very cautious in this case, show the same caution in others, which surely need it full as much? Why do they never restrain any body from image worship, for fear of their falling into idolatry? Why do they never forbid the use of indulgences, for fear of their being mistaken for a licence to sin? Multitudes of questions like these might be with equal reason asked? and it is very strange, met

that they should be suspicious of nothing doing harm but the Bible. But after all, is the danger so very great? Hath God Almighty inspired men to write and publish so exceedingly unsafe a book, and so very unfit to be read by the generality of those, for whom he intended it: that had not the Church of *Rome*, in their great wisdom, forbidden persons to look into it, without their leave, it might have done infinite harm, and does not a little still? We cannot think so. Men were liable to make an ill use of things, to fall into errors and heresies, in all ages. Yet neither the prophets under the Old Testament, nor our Saviour and his apostles in the times of the New, ever bethought themselves of this way for preventing it; but recommend and enjoin the reading of Scripture in the strongest terms. Now it is wonderful they should not be as wise as those who come after them. St. *Peter* himself, who mentions this danger of men's *wresting the Scriptures*, yet does not in the least blame, but supposes every man's reading them notwithstanding. And St. *Paul*, whose epistles were the very Scriptures they wrested, yet never requires them to be kept from any one Christian of the several Churches he writes to; nay, most strictly requires the contrary, concerning an epistle as liable to be misunderstood as any of them all, and which actually was misunderstood immediately, I mean his first epistle to the *Thessalonians*. Yet notwithstanding that, *I charge you by the Lord*, says he, *that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren*¹. Did then the ancient Christians, in whose days there were heresies in great plenty, did they restrain any of the people from reading the Scriptures, in order to preserve them from heresy? No. The *Romanists* do not pretend it. They well know, that a man's delivering up his Bible was always, as ought to be, the mark of apostacy from religion.

¹ 1 Thess. v. 27.

They know there is no one thing almost so much insisted on by fathers and councils, as the necessity that all persons, without exception, should be well acquainted with the word of God. Thus little apprehensive was the primitive church of any danger from this practice. The Church of *Rome*, we own, has some cause to be apprehensive. For had the people once general liberty to read and judge from Scripture, there is great danger they might come in general to see, what now they who do see dare not own, how widely it differs from the doctrines commonly taught them. We acknowledge then they are *wise in their generation*. The Scripture is against them; and they will be against the Scripture; lower its credit as far as they dare; keep it out of men's hands, where they can; and where they cannot, they pervert it by false translations, obscure it by false glosses, and make it of none effect, by setting up a pretended authority of interpreting it quite to another thing than it evidently means. We, God be thanked, need not these arts, and we use them not. We permit, we beseech, we require you all to read the Scriptures diligently, and judge of their meaning impartially: to compare with them every thing we teach you, and believe nothing but what you find agreeable to them. We have no fear of your being poisoned by the food of life, or led into error by the word of truth. On the contrary, we know not any surer way of preserving men from errors, and those of the Church of *Rome* in particular, than that which St. Paul prescribes *Timothy*, in the third chapter of his second Epistle. *This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, hast been assured of; knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make*

thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

CHAPTER XII.

Various Corruptions and Superstitions of the Church of Rome.

THERE are still many other points, in which great corruptions of the *Romish* Church might be shown you. Such is their equalling the apocryphal books to the canonical ; which the ancient Christians did not. Such is their modern addition of five new sacraments to those two which Christ appointed, and making the belief of this precise number essential to salvation : making also the priest's intention so necessary to the benefit of the sacraments, that nobody should be the better for them without it ; a person baptized, for instance, shall be no Christian notwithstanding, if the priest had malice enough to design he should not. Of the same bad tendency is their burying every part of religion under a load of rites and ceremonies, that turn it into outward show ; and giving it the appearance of art and magic by an infinity of absurd superstitions, many of them the undeniable remains of heathenism very little disguised : their engaging such multitudes of people in vows of celibacy and useless retirement from the world : their obliging them to silly austerities and abstinences of no real value, as matters of great merit : their excessive veneration of relics, most of them fictitious and unfit to be thus honoured, were they ever so genuine : their inventions of romantic legends and lying miracles, which make weak and unlearned persons believe any thing, and too many of those, who see through them, believe nothing.

And besides these and other errors in spiritual matters, there are many more of most weighty consideration in temporals, which they zealously maintain: their claim of punishing whom they please to call heretics with penalties, imprisonments, tortures, death; their excommunicating and deposing kings; their forbidding divine worship through whole nations at once; their annulling the most sacred promises and engagements, when made to the prejudice of their church: their drawing, by wicked artifices, the wealth of all countries to the support of their own tyranny. But many of these things I have set in a proper light to you on other occasions, and dwelling on all would be endless as well as unnecessary. Enough, I hope, hath been said, to show you which are in the right; and that *this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand*. For observe, as the whole claim of the Church of *Rome* depends upon her being in all points infallible: so, if in any single point she proves to be mistaken, her pretence of being believed in the rest falls entirely to the ground. But indeed, though for your fuller satisfaction I have confuted many of her doctrines, yet any person may have sufficient satisfaction of his own being in the right way, without so much as knowing or having heard what any one of her doctrines is. For let him but keep close to the Creed and the Commandments; believe those things which Scripture hath made necessary to be believed, and do those things which Scripture hath made necessary to be done; and he is under no manner of obligation to enquire what any Church on earth thinks fit to believe or do besides. Many opinions may be true and useful; many practices may be innocent and edifying; but nothing can be matter of necessity, except what Christ and his apostles have required as terms of salvation. Every person, that complies with these, is a true Christian: every Church that teaches these, is a true Church; and neither igno-

rance nor error about any other matters can forfeit our title to everlasting life. Search then the Scriptures and see: is there any one thing made necessary there which our Church forbids? Is there any one thing declared sinful there which our Church requires? If not, let their Churches prohibit or enjoin as they please at their own peril. We are no way bound to inquire what they do, or why. Letting alone their peculiarities we are sure is safe. Whether making use of them be or not, is their business to consider, not ours. So that were transubstantiation, for instance, and purgatory true; were the worship of images and praying to saints lawful, which, God knows, they are far from being; yet as there is no pretence that they are necessary doctrines and practices, the mistake of rejecting them could have no harm in it; but the uncharitableness of condemning and cursing those who reject them may have great harm. For when once Christ hath said, believe and do such and such things, and you shall be saved: who is it that shall dare to say, believe and do more, or you shall not be saved? It is dreadful arrogance, therefore, which the Church of Rome shows in this respect; coining new articles of faith, some of which they own were not articles of faith from the beginning, and sentencing men to hell for not believing what, before that sentence, themselves acknowledge nobody was bound to believe. This, you see, is changing the terms of the Christian covenant arbitrarily, and making a new Gospel at their own pleasure. But in opposition to their decisions and *anathemas*, hear one of St. Paul: *Though an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we, the Apostles of Christ, have preached, let him be accursed. Trust then yourselves on this foot: for other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid*¹.

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 11.

Nor indeed did the primitive church for several hundreds of years, attempt it, or make any doctrine necessary, which we do not; as the learned well know from their writings; and the unlearned may know from the most ancient of their creeds, which we now use in our constant service. Afterwards indeed needless editions first crept in, then false ones: but, had they begun ever so much sooner, our cause had received no prejudice. *To the law and to the testimony*, as the prophet directs, we appeal: *if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*¹.

CHAPTER XIII.

General Pleas of the Papists confuted.

A SUFFICIENT number of the doctrines of the *Romanists* have been considered, and what they plead for them, examined. But besides the pleas they make for each in particular, they have others for all in general. Should they when they want to make a convert, fairly propose to him each of their notions separately, and give him proofs, first, that it is true, and then that it obliges him to quit our communion for theirs; this they are sensible would be a hopeless undertaking. And, therefore, very wisely they are for shorter work, and have general arguments, it seems, to prove that, let their doctrines or ours be what they will, we must be in the wrong, and they in the right.

One of these arguments is their infallibility, but these I hope were fully confuted in my first discourse, and indeed in every one since. For it is in vain for them to pretend they cannot be mistaken, if it appear but in any single instance that they are.

Another is, that Protestants, not being of the *Roman* Church, are not of the Catholic Church: for the Catholic Church is but one, and out of it

¹ Isa. viii. 20.

there is no salvation. Now we acknowledge it is but one body under one head, Christ Jesus; but then, in this one body there are many members; and why are not the churches of *Greece, Asia, and Africa*; why is not ours as true a member of it as theirs? On what authority, if names are worth disputing about, do they ingross that of *Catholic* to themselves? Do we not profess the true Catholic Faith, that Faith which the Universal Church received from the apostles? We profess it much purer than they. Are the sacraments more duly administered by them than by us? Far from it: for of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, one half they have taken away from the laity; and concerning the other half, they taught the most monstrous absurdities, and built on them the most shocking idolatry. Then, for that of baptism, we administer it with water alone, just as Christ appointed, whereas they have added oil, salt, spittle, and I know not what, as if it were on purpose to make it as unlike his institution as they can. Is then the appointment or ordination of their clergy more valid, or more regular than ours? On no account whatever. For if they brought down the succession uninterrupted to the Reformation, we have certainly preserved it uninterrupted since: which now they may be ashamed to deny, since a learned man of their own communion hath fully proved it. And, consequently, for them, who are but a very unsound part of the Catholic Church, to call themselves the whole of it, is quite as absurd, as for a diseased limb (though perhaps the larger for being diseased) to be called the whole body. But they will say, we separated, and so cut off ourselves from the Catholic Church, at the Reformation. I answer, we did not. We only cast out, as was our duty, the errors that were crept in: and we did it by the lawful authority of our superiors, both ecclesiastical and civil. Upon which, the Church of *Rome*, instead of imitat-

ing our good example, commanded all they could influence, to quit our communion. It is they then who made the separation, and it is they that continue it. We are ready still to join in communion with them, upon the terms of the Gospel: and they refuse to join with us, but upon terms of their own devising. Now when two churches break communion with one another; though it is always a fault, yet it does not always follow, that either of them is thereby broken off from the Catholic Church, any more than it follows, that when two men break off acquaintance, one of them is broken off from the civil society to which they belonged. But when one Church shall excommunicate another, merely because the governors of that other made such alterations in it as the Scriptures warrant, and because the people complied with those alterations, such an instance of presumption and uncharitableness, is much more likely to cut off those that use it from the Church of Christ, than those against whom it is used. But supposing we had even acted without, and separated from our Church governors, as our Protestant brethren abroad were forced to do: was there not a cause? When the Word of God was hidden from men, and his worship performed in an unknown tongue; when pernicious falsehoods were required to be professed, and sinful terms of communion to be complied with: when Church authority, by supporting such things as these, became inconsistent with the ends for which it was established, what remedy was there but to throw it off, and form new establishments? If in these there were any irregularities, they were the faults of those who forced men into them; and are of no consequence in comparison with the reason that made a change necessary. For were a man to separate himself from every Church he knows on earth, in order to obey the laws of Christ, he would still be a most valuable member of that *general assembly and*

*Church of the first-born, that are written in heaven*¹. For what communion hath light with darkness?—And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?—Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty².

But it is an article of faith, they tell us, that the church of *Rome* is the mother and mistress of all churches; and, therefore, to cast off her authority can never be lawful. We answer, the mother of all churches she certainly is not. For in *Jerusalem* was the first Christian society, and from thence were derived many others, more ancient than that of *Rome*. Nor was that church the mother of the *British* churches, nor of all the *English*. But had the first persons that founded the Gospel here been sent from *Rome*, that had given them no manner of authority over us. Whence is she then the mistress? Why *St. Peter* was head of the Church, and the bishops of *Rome* are his successors. But the Scripture tells us, *Christ is head of the Church*³, and tells us of no other. We own it was said to *St. Peter*, *Upon this rock will I build my Church*⁴. But this rock, for aught they can ever prove, might be, not *St. Peter's* person, but his confession made immediately before: that *Jesus was the Christ*. Or, if the Church was to be built on *St. Peter*, yet not on him alone, but upon the foundation of all the apostles and prophets, as *St. Paul* teaches expressly⁵. And accordingly, the wall of the new *Jerusalem*, or Church of God, is said to have twelve foundations, on which were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb⁶. To *St. Peter*, indeed, it

¹ Heb. xii. 23.

² Eph. i. 22; iv. 15.

³ Eph. ii. 20.

Secker's five Sermons.

⁴ 2 Cor. vi. 15, 16, 17, 18.

⁵ Matt. xvi. 18.

⁶ Rev. xxi. 14.

was promised *that the keys of the kingdom of heaven should be given him, and that whatever he bound or loosed on earth, should be bound or loosed in heaven*¹. But this very same, and other as great things, are said to all the apostles equally². St. Peter was appointed by Christ *to feed his sheep*³: but so surely was every one of them. The first rank, therefore, he might have among the apostles; but authority over them not the least. On the contrary, St. Paul tells us that *he withstood St. Peter to the face, because he was to be blamed*⁴, and says of himself, in two different places, that he was *nothing behind, not a whit behind, the very chiefest apostles*⁵. But had St. Peter possessed ever so much authority, what is that to the church of Rome? Why, St. Peter was bishop of Rome. But even this is what they can never prove, nor is it probable. Or if he was, perhaps it was only of the Jewish Christians at Rome. For St. Paul tells us, *the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to him, and that of the circumcision to Peter*⁶; and the Jewish church there is extinct. Or if bishop of all Rome, he was bishop, they say, also, of Antioch; and why must their church inherit his authority more than that church? But why indeed must it be inherited at all? It was given personally to St. Peter as an apostle: what had others to do with it, who were no apostles, though they did succeed him as bishops? All pre-eminence of one church above another was nothing originally, but an institution of men for convenience and order. Rome being the chief city in the world, it was natural to look on the bishop of Rome as the chief bishop. And precedence being thus allowed them, by time and opportunity, and arts that were often very wicked

¹ Matt. xvi. 19.² John xxi. 15, 16, 17.³ 2 Cor. xi. 5 : xii. 11.³ Matt. xviii. 18. John xx. 23.⁴ Gal. ii. 11.⁵ Gal. ii. 7.

ones, they improved it into a claim of authority : to which, though not near the whole Church ever submitted, yet at length a great part did. Then to the prerogative, of which they had thus by degrees got possession, they began to pretend Christ himself had originally given them a right. And having managed so well, that part of the world believed them, and part durst not contradict them, they took on them the title of universal bishops, which one of themselves not long before had declared, whoever should take was the forerunner of antichrist. And then under this they claimed all power over the souls, bodies, and fortunes of men, and exercised it with all possible insolence, rapaciousness, cruelty, and impiety.

Now what could there be done when such a power was thus acquired, and thus exercised, but to throw it off, and assert that liberty to which we had an undoubted right? For as to any scheme of coming to terms, never did the Church of *Rome* recede from any one pretension she ever made. The exercise of authority she had omitted indeed, whenever she durst not exercise it: but all her claims she hath constantly kept up, and excommunicates yearly, to this day, every prince in *Christendom* that shall refuse obedience to any constitution of the Pope's whatever. It is true, even the *Popish* princes at present regard not this excommunication, and she knows not how to make them regard it. But were once the *Protestants* re-united to that Church on the terms of allowing her any superiority; who knows how soon a power, that had once risen from nothing to that formidable height which it had attained, may rise again to be as formidable as ever! Another of their pleas is this; that which was the ancient religion and church must be the true one. Now where was your Church, say they, before *Henry* the VIIIth? Where was your religion before *Luther*? We answer, our Church was before that time

just where it is now. Only then it was corrupted with many sinful errors, from which is now reformed. Still it is the same Church it was before; just as a man formerly addicted to many vices, and afflicted with many distempers, continues the same man, after he hath forsaken the one, and recovered from the other; and it would be very strange to make his alteration for the better an objection against him. And for our religion: where was that before *Luther*? Why, wherever Christianity was. Did *Luther* invent the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Two Sacraments? These are the things in which our religion consists; and theirs consists in the same. Only they have added, by degrees, a number of needless, false, and wicked things to them, which we have cast off again. Our religion therefore is the ancient Christianity, professed from the days of the apostles. But where was their religion in those days, I mean the doctrines in which they differ from us! All of them hundreds of years later; many of them a thousand: some of them established no longer ago than the council of *Trent*, which is since the time of *Luther*. For then, and not before was it, that they filled up the measure of their iniquities, which had long been growing; equalled their own traditions to the word of God, and added a new creed to the old one. Our rejecting their additional doctrines, we own is new; and no wonder: for the doctrines themselves are new. Some of them indeed reigned much too long: had they been rejected sooner it had been better: but better late than never. Still, our denying these is no more part of our religion, properly speaking, than our denying *Mahometanism*, or the idolatry of the *Chinese*, is part of our religion. Were it not for their pressing them upon us, our people should never hear them mentioned. We take no pleasure in exposing their absurdities, but are heartily grieved at them: and have much better employment for our hearers than

these controversies, did not their restless endeavours to pervert men make it sometimes necessary.

But this plea of their Church being the most ancient, they sometimes put in a different form : and tell us, that either the *Romish* Church established here before the Reformation was the true Church, or it was not. If it was, why do we protest against it. If it was not, how can ours be a true Church, which is derived from it ? The answer is very plain. In one respect, as their Church professed the fundamentals of Christianity, it was and is a true Church ; and so far ours is derived from it. In another respect, as it obscured and contradicted them by unjustifiable doctrines and practices, it was not a true Church ; and so far we protest against it. Their truths we have preserved ; their errors we have rejected. In one sense we are the same Church with them still ; in the other we are not the same, but a much better.

Another way which they have of arguing against the Reformation, is aspersing the characters of those who were engaged in it, and ascribing bad motives to them. Now as to this ; if the main thing done was right, as it plainly was, what sort of instruments God employed in it, or what their personal inducements were, is of no consequence to us in the least. *Jehu* was an instrument of God in destroying *Baal* out of *Israel*, and executing vengeance on the house of *Ahab* ; yet very wicked in some respects¹. So was *Henry* the VIIIth commendable in destroying the supremacy of the pope, yet highly blameable in other things. The greatest part of the reformers were very good men, and acted from the best of motives. Some of them had doubtless great faults, and might act from bad motives. Nay, such as meant very well, might, in particular things, do very ill. For what constantly happened in all other cases, no

¹ 2 Kings x. 28. 31.

wonder it happened in this. However, the most blameable were not near so bad, as the malice of their adversaries represents them; and had they been much worse, yet they could scarce possibly be so bad as some of those princes, and even of those popes were, who built up the antichristian power, which these men demolished.

But whatever becomes of this comparison, still upon the whole, theirs is the Church, they tell us, in which the most numerous and brightest instances of devotion, self-denial, and good works, have shone forth, as the many histories of their saints fully prove: ours is a low, carnal religion: most of our people are very bad, few or none of them eminently good; and that must be the best Church, which makes the best men. Now the truth is, these magnified instances of piety of theirs are most of them instances only of mere superstition, or blind zeal: and the saints, whom they have canonized, were, many of them, very weak, and some of them, very wicked persons, whose lives are pompously dressed up in legends and fables, to amuse and mislead the ignorant. We, for our parts, leave them to make a noise with fanciful ways of being religious: and doubt not, but we please God much better by performing quietly the real duties of life. And, though we acknowledge and lament that a failure in these is too general amongst us, yet we must remind them, when they insult us upon this, that there is no where on earth more vile and more open wickedness, than where popery reigns without control. If, when they live under Protestant governments, they live in a more Christian manner, we are heartily glad of it. But still we hope, even here the lives of our people are not worse than theirs: and we are sure it is not the fault of our religion if they are not much better.

But they tell us, however these things may be, yet their communion is undoubtedly the safer of the two. For they say, we cannot be saved, and we

own they may be saved : and that Church is plainly the safer, in which both sides acknowledge salvation is to be had. But consider ; does their saying we are not safe make us ever the less so in reality : the question is, upon what grounds do they say it ? Why, upon none at all, as I have shown you. And, therefore, all they can prove by saying it, is their own confidence, of which those persons have generally the most, who have the least reason for it ; and their own uncharitableness, for which, if we at all understand Christianity, no side will ever be the safer. Well ; but we do not deny, that they may be saved. No more do I or they deny, but even a virtuous heathen may have some degree of happiness in another life. Suppose, then, he should take it into his head to deny that a Christian could, must I turn heathen to be of the safer side ? You see it is just the same case. But, after all, do we lay it down as a rule without exception, that all Papists may be saved ? We dare not say so. Some of them go much more justifiable lengths than others ; the ill things that many of them do, they do in ignorance ; this, we hope, will be an excuse for them in a great measure. Yet, even for the most ignorant, their salvation is grievously hazardous amidst so many corruptions, which one should think even they might perceive to be such, and so many temptations to neglect that *holiness without which no man shall see the Lord*¹. The condition of the learned amongst them, who, when the light is before their eyes, continue in darkness, and keep others in it, is still more dangerous. But in the worst state of all are they, who being born *children of light*, return to darkness again ; and sin wilfully after they have been bred up amongst us in the knowledge of the truth. Yet even among these there are very different degrees of guilt. Such whose good meaning hath been misled by

¹ Heb. xii. 14.

plausible artifices, we must still hope well of ; though doubtless they must have been sinfully negligent of informing themselves concerning the grounds of their first belief ; else they had never left it. A second sort, who depart from what, in their consciences, they believe is the truth, merely because a presumptuous man tells them they cannot be saved if they adhere to it, these are much more blameworthy than the former. But for such as, either from the love of worldly interest, or the wretched hope of reconciling sin and salvation together, turn aside from the way of righteousness, and forsake that pure and holy communion, which the good providence of God hath placed them in ; as to such, we cannot judge favourably, and we will not judge hardly : *there is one that judgeth*¹, *who will also render to every man according to his deeds*² ; but indeed we can see no promise of their finding *mercy in that way*. Suffer not yourselves then to be moved either by vain threatenings or false promises, nor ever think to be safe in any other way, than that of first inquiring carefully, what your duty is ; and then keeping close to the practice of it. Be assured it is safe to worship God, through Jesus Christ, and let all other worship alone ; safe to receive the holy communion as our Lord himself gave it, to pray in a language you all understand, and make that holy word *which was written for your learning*³ the foundation and rule of your faith, your practice, and your hopes. Fear not but you are safe in doing thus ; whether *Romanists* be safe in doing otherwise or not. God grant they may ! but God forbid that any of us should try !

¹ John. viii. 50.

² Rom. ii. 6.

³ Rom. xv. 4.

CHAPTER XIV.

Rules of Conduct towards the Roman Catholics.

IN the first place, let none of their bad doctrines or practices ever tempt you in the least to any hard treatment of them, any incivility, or secret ill-will, towards them. Justice and mercy, equity and charity, are main parts of religion: and a failure in these is one of the worst heresies into which we can fall. We know the church of *Rome* hath failed in them greatly; our ancestors have felt their cruelty; our Protestant brethren abroad groan under it at this day, and may God preserve us and our posterity from the danger of it; for never had they mercy long when they had power. Careful self-defence against such a spirit must be allowed us; but as to any thing farther, in those things for which we blame them, let us not be like them. The severe laws we have in force against them were not enacted for their religious opinions, but for their refusing to own, and promise due obedience to the government under which they live: and they have long experienced that nothing but absolute necessity will ever oblige our superiors to put any of these laws into execution. Let us, therefore, show in our private capacities the same good temper. As men, they have a title to all humanity: as Christians, though mistaken, they have a yet stronger claim to our forbearance and tenderness. Their doctrines, indeed, are dangerous; their practices have been dreadful; but this, in a great measure, hath arisen from ignorance, and a *zeal of God, though not according to knowledge*¹. Numbers of them, without doubt, inwardly disapprove religious cruelties, and think at least they could never be brought to join in them. However this may be, (which God forbid should ever come to be tried) yet in the mean time nothing hinders but as in religion they may to the best of

¹ Rom. x. 2.

their judgment be sincerely pious, so in common life they may be just and honest, friendly and neighbourly. Let us, therefore, with much better natured principles, be sure not to appear worse natured persons ; but recommend our profession to all the world by that *wisdom which is from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits*¹.

In the next place, let nothing which hath been said make those, who are not some way called to it, over-forward to dispute about these matters with persons of more learning and art than themselves. For a man may have very good reasons on his side, and yet be so little qualified to set them in the best light, that an excellent cause may be hurt by want of skill in managing it. What I have endeavoured is only that you may *be able*, as *St. Peter* directs, *to give an answer to them that ask you a reason of the hope that is in you*². In doing which, remember you are concerned only to be on the defensive. They are to prove, if they can, that every one of their doctrines is not only true, but an article of faith, and every one of their practices not only lawful, but necessary. Till they have done all this, you have no reason to change : and when they have done it, we allow you to change. But observe one thing : if you hear them deny any of the points with which they have been charged, do not be staggered at it. Would to God they were not guilty of them ! They would be more in the right, and we should be never the less so. But do not think a charge unjust, because they confidently say it is. The more ignorant of them here among us, perhaps, do not know the worst part of their doctrines : and the more learned will not own them, till they are forced. These concealments are no new things with them. In some countries many of their missionaries have concealed a great part of the Christianity they pretended to teach, and allowed

¹ James iii. 17.² 1 Peter ii. 15.

heathenism to be blended with it in order to make converts, such as they are, the more easily. No wonder then if here they veil over their corruptions with a fair mask, which if we do not pull off, they will not throw off, till the proper time comes.

Another thing is, If ever you should be pressed with any of their arguments which I have mentioned, and not perhaps remember the answer to it, still remember you have seen it answered. Or if any other arguments should be used, to which you cannot of yourselves reply, consult those that can: tell us your difficulties in time; be assured such as would keep you from this do not mean honestly: give us but a fair hearing before you determine to leave us, and we doubt not your staying with us. Even if any of you should be unhappily brought to think favourably of some of their doctrines, remember still how monstrous others of them are; and yet, if you do not swallow all, you have done nothing. We allow persons to have very different opinions from us in some points, and suffer them to continue among us as very good Christians notwithstanding; but their Church makes no abatement; their very grossest errors must be professed, or you are none of them. Think well then what you do; and, as I once advised before, never let subtlety and sophistry, whether you know exactly how to answer it or not, prevail against Scripture and reason; but ever stick to the plain word of God, and plain common sense.

One direction more I have of the utmost importance; which is, if ever we would secure ourselves to good purpose against the dangers of false religion, let us carefully promote the profession and practice of the true. If persons are bred up in no knowledge of, and no zeal for the principles of their own Church, no wonder that they are easily carried off, and seduced into another. If they are encouraged to live without regard to God, many of them, however, will be afraid to die so too; and then that communion

which makes the largest promises of forgiveness on the easiest terms, will be almost sure to be embraced by them. Men, wise in their own imaginations, think they are sure to root out superstition, if they plant infidelity. But mankind must and will have some religion; and if they forsake a good one, sooner or later the uncomfortableness of unbelief, and the terrors of conscience after a wicked life, will drive most of them to a worse. Besides, whilst we are divided and negligent about these matters, the emissaries of the church of *Rome* are united and active, and never with more sanguine hopes, and when they can plead experience, that the liberty allowed by the Protestant religion leads men of course to throw off all religion. These are plain reasons for a public regard to piety and virtue: and there are yet more important ones for a private conscientious practice of them; for that, after all, is the only thing that will establish us in the truth, fill our hearts with peace and comfort in this life, and give us everlasting happiness in the next. If, then, you have any concern either for the honour of that Church to which you belong, for the welfare of your country, or the salvation of your souls, *let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ*¹. Pity and pray for them who are in error, that God would *give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth*², and *building up yourselves*, as St. Jude exhorts, *in your most holy faith, keep yourselves in the love of God; looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*³.

¹ Phil. i. 27.² 2 Tim. iii. 25.³ Jude, ver. 20, 21.

THE END.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS
OF THE
REFORMERS AND FATHERS
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND:
No. IV.

A DISCOURSE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER:

BEING PART OF THE CATECHISMUS OF 1548;

SET FORTH IN ARCHBISHOP CRANMER'S NAME,

AND BY HIS AUTHORITY.



Adapted to the Use of the Society.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE following extract is taken from a work entitled, "Catechismus; that is to say, A short Instruction into the Christian Religion, for the singular Commodity and Profit of Children and Young People, set forth by the Most Reverend Father in God, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1548." This Catechism was not composed by Archbishop Cranmer, but was translated by him from the Latin of Justus Jonas, a German reformer, yet with such alterations as the translator thought fit. The Archbishop gave it the sanction of his name as above, at the time of its being published; and when charged with holding and circulating its doctrines, as an offence in the estimation of his persecutors, he did not shrink from the responsibility, but avowed both the publication and the translation to be his own work.

SELECTIONS,

&c.

UPON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

YE have learned, in the Creed, what we ought to believe, and in the Ten Commandments what we ought to do; but we can neither believe nor do as we ought to do, except the Holy Ghost work within us, both a true faith and also a due obedience towards God and his law. For "faith is the gift of God," "and all good things come from the Father of lights¹." Therefore we must needs ask and crave these benefits at His hand who only is the giver of ^{them}. For so Christ saith, that God the Father will give to us his children all things, if we sue to Him for them. And the prophet David saith, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me²." Also our Saviour Christ commandeth us to do the same, saying, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you³." Now, therefore, seeing that ye have learned what we should believe and do, it is most necessary for us to call for God's grace with most fervent and earnest prayers, that we may be able to perform that thing which we are bound to do. For our Saviour Christ hath promised us, that whatsoever we ask the Father in his

¹ James i. 17.

² Ps. l. 15.

³ Matt. vii. 7. Jer. xxix. 13, 14. Mark vii. 24—30. Luke xi. 9. John xvi. 23.

name, he will give it us. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do."—"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it¹." Where is to be noted, that if we will obtain our requests, we must ask in the name of Christ, and also trust assuredly, that, for Christ's sake, our prayers will be heard. Therefore, when we pray, we may say thus; Oh God, our Father, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which art in heaven, I durst not of mine own head, be so bold to come unto thy most high and excellent majesty, to desire any thing of thee, but thy well-beloved Son our Lord Jesus Christ hath commanded me so to do, and only in his name and at his commandment I am so bold. Of prayer thus made in faith speaketh St. John, in his epistle, saying, "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us²." Therefore we should stedfastly believe that God doth hear our prayer. For he that believeth not, he shall obtain nothing. And therefore Christ saith, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them³." And to the intent that we should believe ~~and surely think that he heareth us~~, he hath promised to grant whatsoever we ask in his name. And again to the intent that we should know and be sure, that we pray according to his will, he himself hath taught us how and what we should pray and ask. Therefore it is not in our liberty, whether we will pray or not, but by God's commandment, we be bound to pray. Now therefore with all diligence learn the holy prayer of the Lord, which Jesus Christ taught us himself, saying to his disciples, Ye shall pray after this manner:

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily

¹ John xiv. 13, 14.

² 1 John v. 14.

³ Mark xi. 24.

bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil : for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

This is the prayer of the Lord, which, although it be short, yet it containeth most great and weighty matters, such as neither angel nor man, nor other creature, was able to comprise in so few words. For in this prayer Christ our Lord teacheth us to ask all things that either be commanded us in the Ten Commandments, or promised us in the articles of our Creed. Wherefore, you ought to endeavour yourselves, not only to learn without the book this most holy prayer, taught us by Christ's own mouth, our great master and teacher, but also you ought to give diligence to understand, and justly to weigh every word of so great a Master, that when you be examined herein, you may be able to make a direct answer, and also in time to come, to teach your children the true understanding of this prayer, as you yourselves be now instructed. For what greater shame can there be before God and man, than that when in our mouths we profess ourselves to be Christian men, and to know what we ought to believe, and how to live, we shall yet be ignorant what things we ought to ask of God, and after what manner we ought to ask those things, which he of his goodness hath promised most largely to give us? or else if we know how and what to ask, yet that of negligence, sloth, or contempt of God, we should not ask the same in deed in such wise as we ought to do? Specially seeing that the proper office of a Christian man is, to call upon God in all his business and necessities, to give thanks, and evermore to honour His most blessed name with most high lauds and praises. Wherefore, forasmuch as God hath commanded us to resort to him boldly, and to moan ourselves to him in all our troubles and

adversities, and hath promised that he will hear our prayers, deliver us, and grant us all things necessary for our salvation, let us not refuse this honour that we be called unto, let us not refuse this remedy, help, aid, and succour, that is freely offered of our most merciful Father to all his children that will call upon his name. For this is a sacrifice most acceptable to God, wherewith he is most highly honoured and pleased. Wherefore, both daily and hourly accustom yourselves, even from your tender age, to pray to your heavenly Father, for all things necessary. Offer up unto him at your uprising and down lying, before your meals, and after your meat, this sacrifice of your lips, the oblation of praise and thanksgiving, worship him at all times with the frankincense of this prayer taught unto you by your Saviour Christ. The perfume whereof, if it be cast into the burning coals of faith and charity, it pierceth the clouds, and is so sweet and pleasant unto God that it vanisheth not away, until it have obtained that thing that it was sent for. For it is written, that the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much¹," and "the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry²." Wherefore, study you to be the children of God, and there is no doubt but your heavenly Father will give all good things, which you shall desire of him, in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory, now and ever. Amen.

A Declaration of the First Petition.

Now to the intent you may the better understand this prayer, you shall first learn this lesson, that we wretched sinners do not first prevent God, and go before him, in the work of our justification, but it is God that layeth the first foundation of our salvation. He beginneth with us, and first calleth us by the Gospel. First, he sendeth

¹ *James* v. 16.

² *Ps.* xxxiv. 15.

² *Ps.* xxxiv. 15.

unto us godly and faithful ministers by whom we be baptized, and before we do any good work, he offereth unto us his grace, he sendeth unto us preachers and messengers of peace, which declare unto us the glad tidings of the Gospel, and the promises of the favour of God, towards all them who truly repent them of their evil living, and put their trust in God's mercy for pardon of the same. God also openeth our hearts, that we may listen and give credit to his holy preachers. Now forasmuch as God hath called us to the faith, and by faith hath given us light in our hearts, that we may forsake all strange gods, and believe only in him, it is our part to lead our life in godliness, to desire God with fervent and hearty prayers; that it may please him to make perfect that thing which he hath begun in us; to help and strengthen us, that by his grace we may be able to do those things which he hath commanded us; and that he will augment and increase our faith in us. For the prayer of the unbelieving is nothing worth before God, and without faith it is impossible to please God. Therefore God must begin and call us by his word, and put faith in our hearts, or else we should never ask any thing of him. And for this cause, we are not taught in the Lord's prayer to say to God, Father, grant me to believe that thou art my Father, but we are taught to say thus;—"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." That is to say, O Lord God, our heavenly Father; before I began to pray, and before I knew thy name, thou, through thine exceeding great mercy, didst send unto me thy preachers, by whom thou didst declare unto me, that thou art my Father for Jesus Christ's sake, and thou didst open my heart, that I might believe that thou art my Father. Therefore grant, I beseech thee, my heavenly Father, that thy name may be hallowed.

And he that taketh not God to be his Father, yet he may learn that it is so by this prayer. For Christ, our Lord knew most certainly the will of his

heavenly Father, that is to say, that he would be our most sweet and loving Father, (for else he would not have taught us this title, Our Father,) and, therefore, must we again upon our parts have such a love and obedience to him, as becometh the children unto their father, and conceive a most assured trust in God, (who is Father of us all) that we shall lack nothing necessary for us, and that nothing shall be able to hurt, as long as we have so mighty and so loving a Father. We see by daily experience, how entirely fathers love their children, what care they take to bring them up in virtue and learning, and to get them good masters and governors, how they labour to provide for their living and all things necessary for them. And if perchance their children commit any fault, for the which they deserve correction, yet we see how the father's love remaineth, what pity and compassion he hath of them, how loth he is to beat them, and would rather forgive them, if it were not for their benefit and amendment. And when the child falleth on his knees, and asketh forgiveness, promising amendment, we see how ready and willing the father is to forgive. Now seeing our earthly fathers be so loving to their children, much more God our heavenly Father will be our most kind and loving Father, will nourish, keep, and defend us, teach and instruct us, in the way to everlasting salvation. And if we fall into any error or sin, yet for Christ's sake he is willing to forgive us, and although he punisheth us here for a time, yet he doth it of the fatherly love that he beareth towards us, that he may not punish us for ever, but may amend us, and make us to know our faults, and to bring us again into the right way. And like a most loving father, he correcteth us for a small time in this world, lest he should punish us for ever in the world to come. In this therefore so loving and so mighty a Father we may well rejoice, and have an exceeding great comfort, far passing any heart to think, or tongue to tell. And him again we ought most entirely to love and obey, seeing

that he is our father, and hath laden us with so many gifts and benefits. With glad hearts, therefore, you ought to say this prayer, which, when you say, you speak with God the Father in heaven, and he heareth you, and, like a most kind Father, doth grant all that you ask. Oftentimes also, and earnestly, you must pray, when you rise in the morning, when you go to the Church, when you eat and drink, when you go to bed, when you awake out of your sleep, that from your youth you may accustom yourselves both gladly and often to pray. For by prayer we shall obtain all things, that either Christ hath purchased for us, or our heavenly Father hath promised to us. Now this also you must diligently consider, that we say, "Our Father which art in heaven," to distinguish him from our fathers which are here upon earth. For we have fathers here on earth which are but men, and are not able to save us. But in heaven we have another manner of Father, of far more might, a spiritual and an everlasting Father; which in all our needs is able to help us, and finally to give us health and life everlasting. And as children take of their carnal fathers' flesh and blood, and many times be very like them in their face and countenance, so take we of our heavenly Father our soul and spirit, and therein we ought to resemble our heavenly Father, that is to say, we ought in all things to be conformable to his holy will and word. And then is he assuredly our gentle Father, and we his dear children. And then as he dwelleth in heaven, in a light passing all measure, even so shall we dwell with him in heaven for ever. These great things (which far exceed the capacity of man's understanding,) our Saviour Christ doth teach in these few words, which he teacheth us to say: "Our Father, which art in heaven."

Now follow in this holy prayer certain petitions. These petitions you shall learn with all diligence, that you may know what you should ask. The three first petitions treat of the matters pertaining to the first Table. The other four speak of things belong-

ing to the second Table, as hereafter you shall hear. These be the words of the first petition,

"Hallowed be thy name."

I have already told you, that we do not prevent, or go before, God; we pray not first, that God will be our God and our Father; but that God of his inestimable mercy doth prevent us, doth call us by his word, doth call us unto faith, doth give us his Spirit, to know him for our father and Lord, before we could think thereof and seek for God. But now seeing that by his word and faith he hath called us, and by baptism hath grafted us into Christ, and made us members of his Church, we ought not to be slothful or idle, but study to go forward and increase in godliness, and to pray thus, Our Father which art in heaven, forasmuch as thou hast given unto us, being unworthy, thy holy Gospel; and hast chosen us, and not we thee, and seeing that thou hast sent unto us preachers, which teach unto us thy word, whereby we be sanctified and instructed in the faith, (so that now we may know thee for God,) now fulfil, O Father, that thou hast begun; proceed to help us, that thy name may be hallowed; that is to say, may be honoured as holy.

This prayer pleaseth God, and he heareth it, and God giveth us grace and strength that we may hallow his name. To hallow the name of God is not to make it holy, (which in itself is ever most holy,) but to hallow his name, is to take it for holy, and reverently to use it as a most holy thing, to beware that we speak not of his name vainly, nor without great reverence; to confess his name, to laud him, extol him, and in all necessities to call upon him. And on the other side, we do violate the holy name of God, when we abuse the same to evil and naughty things, when we speak evil of God, or godly things, when we teach any false doctrine of God and his religion, or abuse the name of God to idolatry and errors, or when by the

name of God we be forsworn. Also when, by the name of God, we curse men or other creatures; or when we speak of God and godly things, and make thereof but scoffing and jesting. And when we live not according to the word of God, and regard not God, but give evil example to others, both to think and speak of God and godly things lightly and contemptuously. But now it is our horrible hearing, that we be called the Church of Christ, and Christian men, we be taught that God is our Lord and Father; and yet we be so faint, so evil, naughty, and unkind people, that we do not hallow nor reverently use his name. Therefore it is more than need to pray, and instantly to pray for God's help, that we misuse not his name irreverently, but that we hallow it, and most highly honour it ourselves, and provoke¹ others to do the like; which we shall do, if we teach and preach the word of God purely, and agree unto the same in pure innocent living, so that no man can reprehend us; if we believe God's word, and profess the same; and if in all necessities we call upon his name, and give him thanks for all his benefits. But when false doctrine is taught, then the name of God is defiled, and false doctrine is honoured, and taken for the holy word of God; when indeed it is not holy, but wicked and the false invention of the devil, the inventor of all lies and falsehood. And how can the holy name of God be more horribly abused, than when the Devil's lies and false inventions be set out and honoured, under the pretence and colour of God's holy name, that by that means the people may the sooner be deceived? Moreover, the name of God is not hallowed, but blasphemed and despised, when the true word of God is cruelly persecuted, as Cain persecuted his brother Abel. For when the ungodly hypocrites do call the Gospel and true doctrine of Christ, heresy and error, then is God as it were accused of heresy who gave the said doctrine; which is an horrible

¹ Excite.

blasphemy of God's name. Also, when we believe not the word of God, then we violate and do injury to the name of God, not taking Him to be true. The name of God is not hallowed also, but little regarded and contemned, when the Gospel and word of God is not boldly professed before the world. For he that denieth the Gospel, and doth not constantly stand unto it, but, for fear of men, doth shrink from it, and revoketh those things which before he hath truly and godly taught, he counteth not Jesus Christ the Son of the living God, nor his holy word and Gospel to be of that value and estimation, that he will for their sakes, speak boldly, or suffer any thing, before the kings and powers of the world. Also we do not hallow the name of God, when we call God our Father, and boast ourselves to be his children, and yet that thing which we profess, we do not perform by holy and godly living. For an unthrifty and wicked child is a dishonour to his Father. Hereof complaineth God by the prophet Ezekiel in the thirty-sixth chapter, saying, "Mine holy name ye have profaned among the heathen¹." And he also regardeth not the holy name of God, that doth not call upon God, and give thanks to God; as though he were not the very true God, which hath holpen him, and both can and will help him in all his needs. For he that knoweth himself that he is holpen of God, he of duty must needs give him thanks therefore; and he that trusteth to be holpen, must likewise call upon him for the same. Therefore, briefly to conclude, he that teacheth any other than God's true doctrine, that believeth not in the name of Christ, that doth not boldly confess the word of God, that doth not lead himself according to the Gospel, that doth not call upon God in all necessity, that doth not willingly and gladly give thanks to God for all his benefits, he despiseth God, and his holy name, and giveth occasion to others to do the like, which of all

¹ Ezekiel xxxvi. 22.

other is the greatest offence to God. Therefore we ought to pray that God keep and defend us from this sin. This is the meaning and plain understanding of this petition. The name of God is of itself holy, but in this petition we desire, that we may also hallow it, which we do when the word of God is purely and sincerely taught, when we walk and live according to the Gospel. This grant us, O heavenly Father! for he that teacheth other doctrine than the pure word of God, he dishonoureth and defileth the word of God. Wherefore, from this sin, good Lord, defend us. Here, in this point, succour us, good Lord! help us, O heavenly Father! For he that either teacheth or liveth otherwise than the word of God requireth, he dishonoureth and polluteth the word of God.

“Thy kingdom come.”

That you may understand these words rightly and justly, take good, diligent, heed that you may learn what that kingdom is which you do ask. “The kingdom of God,” (as St. Paul saith, Rom. xiv.) “is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost¹.” And although these words, peradventure, seem unto you hard and dark, yet you shall understand them if you take good heed. You know that emperors and kings in this world, have their realms and kingdoms; and those people that be within their lands and dominions, and duly obey their laws and commandments, those be the true and faithful subjects of their realms. And every king giveth commandments unto his subjects, and governeth them in such wise, that they do not every man what he listeth himself, but what it pleaseth his prince to command him. Even so Almighty God hath here in earth, in his Church, an heavenly kingdom. And this kingdom which Christ, in his Gospel, so often calleth the kingdom of heaven, beginneth among his faithful people in this world.

¹ Rom. xiv. 17.

And all that truly believe and keep his commandments, belong unto this kingdom. And when God, by his Gospel, beginneth to call us unto this kingdom, then the kingdom of God cometh unto us, and beginneth in us. For God beginneth, and, indeed, is the King and Lord of them that be godly; he governeth and ruleth them, so that they work not after the lusts and desires of their own flesh, but as the Lord God (who is their King) teacheth and commandeth them by his word. And kings and great men in this world rule and govern by force, by sore threatenings and grievous pains, and constrain their subjects to obedience, but God doth not order his affairs so in this foresaid kingdom of heaven; but ruleth his subjects like a gentle father, by the word of his Gospel and by the Holy Ghost, and that after this sort. God causeth his Gospel to be preached unto us, how Christ, for our sakes, suffered death, was buried, and rose again, as before you heard in the Creed. Moreover, he openeth our hearts, and giveth us faith to believe his Gospel. And to them that believe his Gospel, he giveth the Holy Ghost, which doth govern us, and lead us unto all truth. For, first, by faith we are justified before God (for faith maketh us partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and planteth us in Christ,) and he that by true faith doth receive the promise of grace, to him God giveth the Holy Ghost, by whom love is shed abroad in our hearts, which "fulfilleth the law." Therefore, he that believeth in Christ, and truly believeth the Gospel, he is righteous and holy before God, by the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed and given unto him, as Paul saith; "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law¹." He is also just before the world, because of the love and charity which the Holy Ghost worketh in his heart. Secondly, faith worketh peace and quietness in our hearts and consciences.

¹ Rom. iii. 28

For by faith we be assured that our sins are forgiven. Therefore, saith St. Paul to the Romans, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ¹." Thirdly, this peace bringeth unto us great and singular joy in our hearts and consciences, and maketh us, for this exceeding benefit of God's mercy and grace toward us, fervently to love him, gladly to laud and praise him, to honour his name, and to profess the same before the world, evermore to give unto him most hearty thanks, and to be swift and ready to do all things that may please God, and to eschew those things that may displease him. This is the said kingdom of God, when by the Gospel and the Holy Ghost God reigneth in our hearts, when he worketh in us our justification, that we, having peace of conscience, may have joy and peace in the Holy Ghost, out of the abundance and plentifulness of grace, and the benefits of Christ. And this is that thing, which St. Paul speaketh to the Romans, "The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost²." Now as an earthly king doth govern his subjects by his laws and commandments, and by his might and power, so doth God rule and govern his Church and true faithful people (which although they are here in earth, yet they are of his heavenly kingdom,) such, I say, he governeth by the holy word of his Gospel, and the power of the Holy Ghost, (whom he poureth plentifully upon all them that believe the Gospel,) and by that comfortable word of the Gospel he gently enticeth and draweth us to him, that we should gladly, of our own free will, obey him.

For God loveth not service constrained by force, such as slaves and bond-men do, more for fear than love; but he would have his people to serve him willingly of heart and love. And this is the foresaid kingdom of God, where he doth in such wise reign in us and govern us, that we do not work after our own

¹ Rom. v. 1.² Rom. xiv. 17.

wills, but in body and mind do cease and rest from our own evil works, and froward wills, and follow the working of God and the Holy Ghost in us. For all these things, therefore, ought you to pray to God, that his kingdom may come, that he will here in earth begin his kingdom in us, that we may obey him in such wise as you have heard. Now the kingdom of God cometh unto us two manner of ways; first, by his word and faith, when the Gospel is preached unto us, that our Lord Jesus Christ delivered us from sin, death, and hell, by his cross, death, and resurrection. For by the preaching of his word we do learn to put our trust in God, and to love God. And this knowledge and faith in Christ, increaseth from time to time, not only in them that have but newly begun to believe, but they also which many years have professed Christ, do profit in the same faith more and more. For their faith and love towards God, by the daily preaching of the Gospel, is confirmed and made more and more strong. Secondly, the kingdom of God shall come to us at the last day when the everlasting glory and kingdom of God shall be revealed; when, at the last day, we shall be raised from death to life, and be received into the kingdom of heaven, where we shall be made perfectly righteous, holy, and safe, for ever, which thing so long as we be here in this world, is hid from us, and appeareth not clearly unto us; but at that last day shall appear to all men with exceeding joy, which no tongue is able to express. As saith St. John, in his first Epistle, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is¹." All these things our Lord God causeth to be preached in the whole world, of his mere goodness and most abundant mercy, not for our works or merits, but before we deserved him. But although it be preached through the world, yet it should not avail us, if we

¹ 1 John iii. 2.

believed not ; that is to say, if he came not into our hearts, if the kingdom of God were not within us. Therefore must we with all diligence pray, that God not only may make this to be preached ; but also that he will give faith not only to others, but also to ourselves. And shortly, this is the sum of this petition, that God by his sincere preachers, will send his word and the Gospel of Christ, and by his Holy Spirit to bring us to the faith, and obedience to God, and daily to increase the same ; and then utterly to separate us from the rest of the world, which is wicked and disobedient, with all their sin and wickedness, and to receive us into his eternal kingdom and glory. This is the meaning and plain understanding of this second petition. The kingdom of God cometh of itself without our prayer, but here we pray that it may come to us ; which cometh to pass when the heavenly Father giveth us his Spirit, to believe his holy word, to live well and godly here in his Church for a time, and after in Heaven for ever.

“ Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”

Ye have heard how in the former petitions, we require of our Lord God, to give us all things that pertain to his glory, and to the kingdom of heaven. To the intent that you may the better understand this petition, you shall know that there be two manner of kingdoms. The first is the kingdom of God, or of Heaven, whereof we spake in the second petition ; the other is an earthly, or worldly kingdom, of the which you shall now hear. Now our Lord God is the chief ruler and governor in both these kingdoms. In the kingdom of heaven he doth so reign, that he beginneth in us here in this world, the kingdom of everlasting life and salvation. And the worldly kingdoms he doth so govern, that here he giveth us peace and quietness, that we may hear and

learn the kingdom of God, and so obtain the kingdom of Heaven. And God hath ordained in this earthly kingdom, common officers and rulers under him, which he hath appointed for this purpose, that they should in his name govern the common people, and labour with all diligence that peace and quietness may be maintained in the same. And he hath given them the authority of the sword, that they should not only therewith defend the godly, but also punish malefactors, and breakers of the common peace and quietness, as traitors, rebellious, homicides, adulterers, thieves, and false witness bearers, and all wrong doers to other men, according to the saying of St. Paul, in the 13th chapter to the Romans, "Let every soul," saith he, "be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." By these words you may well perceive, that it is God's good will and pleasure, that we should lead here in this world an honest and quiet life, and that they which be seditious, and full of trouble, and unquietness in the commonwealth, should be punished. And God hath commanded the governors of commonwealths to punish such as do not obey his commandments, and he himself will punish them also; wherefore let

¹ Rom. xiii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

such as be disobedient look for punishment, not only of the governors here, in the sight of the world, but also of God himself. And the governors, which according to God's commandment do correct and punish offenders, they do worship God highly, and do to him a pleasant and acceptable sacrifice. And God hath ordained the higher powers, and quietness to be in commonwealths, that thereby we might hear and learn the Gospel more easily and quietly. For where war and sedition is, there is not the place to preach the word of God with fruit and profit. For the which cause St. Paul, writing to Timothy, saith on this wise, "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth¹." Now, therefore, forasmuch as we know by God's holy commandments what his will is, it is our part to conform our wills to his will, and to desire him to give us his grace and aid to accomplish his most holy will, saying, as Christ hath taught us, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." For, in this short request, you comprise as much as if you should pray on this fashion:—O God, our most merciful Father in heaven, give us thy grace and help, that we may obey our parents, and common officers, and honour them with all our hearts; keep us from manslaughter, from envy, hatred, malice, anger, desire of revenge, and all evil minds towards our neighbours. Grant that we may heartily love our neighbours, and do them good, both in word and deed. Grant us to live purely and chastely, to avoid all occasions of offence, to provoke nobody to unclean living; but that we may study to save every man's and woman's chastity and honesty. Grant that

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

neither by theft, guile, or any crafty means, we take bribe, or keep away any man's goods from him, but rather that we may help them to save and keep their riches; and, if any of them be in poverty, that we may be willing to relieve them with our alms and charity. Grant that we hurt no man with false witness bearing or lying, but that we may both judge and speak all goodness of our neighbour. Keep us from all evil lusts and desires, that we covet not our neighbour's goods, nor any thing that is his. For all are the commandments of thy holy and godly will, whereto thou hast commanded us to be obedient. And mark well these words, I pray you, that we do not only pray God that his will may be done, but also we desire that it may be fulfilled here of men in earth, even as it is of the angels in heaven. Now the angels in heaven fulfil God's will most perfectly, both with fervent love, and most perfect obedience. And there is not in any of the heavenly spirits any evil desire to do any thing contrary to God's will; but as they are wholly inflamed with most perfect love toward God, even so ought we to be who dwell here on earth. But the weakness and evilness of man's heart is so great, that we are not able to perform the same. For oftentimes we obey God's will not at all, but give ourselves wholly to the lusts of the flesh; oftentimes we do that which God requireth of us, grudgingly, coldly, and, as it were, half against our wills. This is a great feebleness, or rather an horrible sickness, corruption, and pestilent contagion of original sin, by means whereof they that be most holy here in earth be not perfectly just and righteous, but ever they want many things that belong to their perfection. We must therefore pray God, to give us his grace and help, that we may fulfil his holy will, and be made as obedient as the angels are in heaven.

Furthermore, you shall note that when we say thy will be done, we do not only pray for ourselves, but for others also; that both we and they may do the holy will

of God. And when any man goeth about to do any ungodly thing which is against God's will, then we pray in this petition, that God will hinder his naughty purpose, that God's will only may be done. This prayer also is against the devil, and this most corrupt world, that neither the devil's will, neither the will of the wicked world may be done. For when we hear the Gospel preached unto us, and give credit to it, and frame our lives and conversation after the same, then Satan rageth, and is sore grieved, and vexed, then he calleth all his wits unto him, and setteth all his study and craft to stir up false and brain-sick doctors to sow the weeds of heresy and erroneous opinions, where the good seed of God's word was first sown. Then he is busy to raise up persecutions, seditious insurrections, commotions, war, and blasphemies, whereby he may hinder the word of God from having its course, and trouble the kingdom of Christ. And Satan is not alone when he fighteth against Christ and his kingdom, but he hath on his side this false and deceivable world, and also our own flesh, which does not cease to entice and move us against God's most holy will. But when we say in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done," then we do not only pray, that both we and others may keep God's commandments, but we pray also that the most naughty will of the devil and the corrupt world may be broken, and only the will of God may be fulfilled; that in commonwealths may be peace and quietness, the Gospel freely and fruitfully preached, and that we may live in this world holy and godly lives. And forasmuch as Christ our Lord hath commanded us thus to pray, and hath promised that whatsoever we ask the Father in his name, he will give it unto us, we ought stedfastly to believe, and nothing doubt, but that he will stay all the crafty imaginations and compassings of the world and the devil, and defend us against all persecutions, that we may keep and learn his word in peace and quietness. Also, you shall diligently learn this lesson, (which I pray you to

print well in your memories,) that in this petition we yield ourselves wholly to God, to be ordered after his will and pleasure, and willingly to bear whatsoever cross or trouble he shall lay upon our shoulders. For we pray that his will may be done; then we forsake our own will, and make a whole resignation thereof into God's hands, that it may not take effect, which of itself desireth nothing but health of body, riches, honours, rest, and quietness; whereas God's will is contrary, that oftentimes we should be tried in our faith by adversities, and bear our cross, as our Lord and Master Christ was crowned with thorns, and nailed on the cross for our sakes. This St. Paul witnesseth, writing these words, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son¹." And our Saviour Christ, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me²." And this is not a token of God's anger, when he sendeth us affliction or adversity, but rather a sign of his love towards us. "For whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth³," as the wise man Solomon witnesseth. And they that feel not his rod be not his true children, but rather bastards, as St. Paul writeth in the Epistle to the Hebrews⁴. Wherefore, learn patience, that you may gladly suffer adversity; (for correction is a teaching,) and when God shall try your faith with sickness, poverty, persecution, or any other kind of adversity, rejoice and be glad. For these be evident tokens of God's fatherly love towards you, and that he will keep you clean from sin and corruption of this world, and bridle your will, that you may learn to know God's holy will, which is a wonderful wisdom. And therefore St. Paul so many times repeateth in his epistles these words, that is to say, "that ye may know the will of God." For this knowledge is a most high and heavenly

¹ Rom. viii. 29.

² Luk. ix. 23.

³ Prov. iii. 12.

⁴ Heb. xii. 11.

wisdom and obedience; most like to the obedience and holiness of the angels in heaven. And you are bound to obey God, in suffering his rod and cross. For God, in our baptism, hath made this covenant with us, that we must die and be buried with Christ, and be grafted into his passion and death, if we will rise again and be glorified with him in the kingdom of heaven, whereunto he is risen and ascended. Wherefore, mark well these lessons, that you may learn patience in all afflictions and adversities, whether you suffer sickness, poverty, reproaches, or persecution for the Gospel. And whatsoever kind of adversity troubleth you, persuade yourselves for a surety that it is God's will that you should suffer and be tried. And therefore Christ saith, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered¹." Therefore, if perchance at any time you shall be moved to impatience in your trouble and adversity, then with all your hearts call upon God for his aid and succour, desire him to send you the gift of patience, and say, Thy will, good Lord, be done, and not our's. For so our Saviour Christ hath not only taught us to pray, but he himself also did use the like prayer not long before he suffered his passion. And this is the plain meaning of this third petition concerning the fulfilling of God's will. Now I pray you, apply your wills and minds to learn the same, that when you are asked, How understood you the third petition? you may answer after this manner. "Although God's holy will be done without our prayer, yet we pray that it may be done in us, and fulfilled among us here on earth. Which is done when God doth overthrow and destroy the wicked counsels of the devil, of worldly people, and of our own flesh, (which do all that lieth in them to let and hinder the kingdom of God, and the hallowing of his name,) and doth keep us in the true knowledge of his word, in the lively faith of Christ, in

¹ Matt. x. 30.

his love and obedience of his commandments. For this is the holy and perfect will of God; which God grant us to keep now and for ever. Amen."

"Give us this day our daily bread."

Ye have heard how in the former petitions we desire of God to give us all things that belong to the fulfilling of his holy commandments, that we may lead a godly life as well towards God, as also towards our neighbours. Whereby we be evidently taught, that we are not able to fulfil the law and commandments of God, without the grace of Christ and God's help. Now followeth the other four petitions, in the which we pray God, that he will vouchsafe to give us all those things, which are promised to us in the Gospel, and which our creed teaches us to look for. And first, in this fourth petition, we pray to God to grant us all those things which we are taught to believe in the first part of our creed concerning our creation. For when we say, "Give us this day our daily bread," we pray to God, that as through his great mercy and goodness, he did create us, so he will nourish and feed us. Wherefore, if you will understand this petition, you must call to your remembrance those lessons which were taught you in the first article of our belief, treating of the creation. For seeing that God hath made heaven and earth, he is Lord and Master of all creatures in heaven or earth, and all are under his will and pleasure. And forasmuch as he made them all for us, he hath appointed them all to serve us, and to help and relieve our necessities. Wherefore, let us not be careful for meat or drink, or other things necessary for our living. But let us put our confidence in God our Father who hath made us, and given us our lives; and we may be sure that he will also send us all things necessary for the preservation and maintenance of the same. For seeing that he made

all creatures out of nothing, it must needs be that all creatures must obey his will and commandment. And in case there were not in this world creatures sufficient to nourish us, yet we should not mistrust him, for he is able to make new creatures, to give us all things necessary. And to the intent, that no man should trust in himself, thinking that by his own wisdom or labour he is able to get all things necessary to the maintenance of his life, Christ hath taught us, to ask those things of our heavenly Father, who only is able to preserve and feed us. Of him, therefore, ought we heartily to ask the same, saying, "Give us this day our daily bread." For this thing tendeth to the glory of God, and singularly pleaseth him, when we ask of him all things necessary for us. And for this cause God hath commanded us to "pray without ceasing¹." And our Saviour Christ hath promised us, "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it²." And it is evident by the words of this petition that we ought oftentimes to pray. For Christ hath not taught us to ask our sustenance for fifty or three-score years, nor yet for one year, no, nor for one month or week, but he hath willed us to ask our daily bread. And he saith, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself³." Now if we shall not be careful for to-morrow, but only require of God sustenance for the present day, it is manifest hereby, that it is God's will, that we should ask again of him to-morrow. For we shall have as much need of meat and drink to-morrow, as we have this present day, and yet we pray not for to-morrow's food, but for this day's sustenance only. Wherefore, accustom yourselves to pray gladly and often, for that pleaseth God; and he is very ready to give you all things that you need, so that we give him his due honour, and ask of him as our duty is. But

¹ 1 Thess. v. 17.

John xiv. 14.

³ Matt. vi. 34.

especially they that are godly must use to pray, when they go to bed, when they rise, when they go to the church, or sit down at the table. And forasmuch as we are not able to get our daily bread by our own wit, labour, and diligence, except God give it us, let us, therefore, before all things, seek his kingdom, and study to please him, that he may give us all things necessary for us. And although many men in this world get their living and riches by craft and deceit, yet let us abstain from such unlawful means. For they do rather bring poverty to a man than riches, And although bribers, extortioners, usurers, and crafty deceivers of their neighbours, do prosper for a while in this world, yet they seldom establish their things. And God doth only wink at them, suffering them to flourish for a time, that afterwards he may the more grievously punish and suddenly destroy them. And when we desire God to give us our daily bread, think not, that our Heavenly Father will give us only a morsel of bread, and nothing beside; but under the name of bread are all things contained which are necessary to the maintenance of our life, as meat, drink, apparel, house, lands, cattle and money, according to the saying of St. Paul: "The living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy¹." But Christ teacheth us in this petition, to ask only for our daily bread, for this intent that we should be content with such means as our daily use and necessity doth require, and that we should not by over-much eating and drinking, wastefully spend those things wherewith poor people might be relieved. For St. Paul doth command us to labour and work, that we may eat our own bread, and also give to them that have need². The which commandment we shall easily keep, if we will be content with a moderate diet, and keep a measure in our apparel. But they that delight in superfluity of gorgeous apparel and dainty fare, and make pleasure the end

of their eating and drinking, and not necessity, they are not wont to give much to the poor, but commonly such do deceive the needy, bribe and take from them, and oftentimes by plain robberies and force do steal other men's goods, that they may have wherewith to maintain their charges and sumptuous expenses. And we see by daily experience that covetous persons and the rich men of this world, that are given to riot and superfluity, use to give little or nothing at all to the poor. Furthermore, in this petition, we do not only desire our bodily food and sustenance, but also all things necessary to the same, whereby we may use and enjoy such as God hath sent us: that is to say, we pray for seasonable weather and wholesomeness of the air, for health of body, for peace and quietness of the commonwealth, for trusty and faithful servants, and such like. For except God send a fair and seasonable weather, all the fruits and corn growing upon the earth are like to perish; and so all our labour in ploughing, sowing, and planting, shall be bestowed in vain. Also he that hath not his health, he can have no pleasure in his riches, or greatly joy in his meat or drink, be it never so dainty. Furthermore, in war time, although God send us great plenty of corn and wine, yet all is destroyed of our enemies; insomuch, that we may hardly trust our friends from spoiling us. For then all is full of robbing, beating, killing, and wasting with fire and sword. And if we have any thing left us in the time of war, yet we cannot quietly have the use of it for fear, care, and trouble of the wars. And if it is a time of peace, yet if thou hast an enemy within the walls of thine own house, that is to say, if thou have an unkind or unfaithful wife, unthrifty children, untrusty and negligent servants, then by them thy living is wasted and consumed. For all these do defraud thee of thy daily bread, and be the occasion of thy great loss and hindrance. The principal cause of all these adversities is the devil: for he is so mortal

an enemy to mankind, that he is desirous not only to destroy our souls with false doctrines and erroneous opinions, but also through tempests, infection of the air, divers kind of sickness by famine, battle, by the malice and falsehood of our own household and of our neighbours, he would fain consume our life, health, house, and goods, and clearly destroy them. And this wicked spirit would overthrow, in a moment of an hour, whole realms and commonwealths, if God did not hinder him. Wherefore, we must earnestly pray to God that he will stay this wicked spirit, and give us our daily bread; that he will preserve us from all sickness; that having health of our bodies, we may use and enjoy our substance: and that also he will send us godly and diligent rulers, to defend us from our enemies, to provide that neither our goods be stolen from us by thieves or robbers, neither lost or conveyed from us through the untrustiness or falseness of our household servants.

Furthermore, you shall note, that our Lord Jesus Christ hath not taught us to say, Father, give me my daily bread, but "Give us our daily bread:" and likewise in all the petitions that follow, no man prayeth in the singular number for himself alone, but in the plural number as well for others as for himself. By the which lesson we are admonished of the brotherly charity which one of us should bear toward another. For we are all offenders, and from our birth the children of wrath. Nevertheless, God so loved us that he gave his only son Jesus Christ to suffer death for us, to obtain for us remission of our sins, to reconcile us to him, and to make us his children. Therefore, now is God our Father, and Christ our Brother, and we are God's children and heirs, and co-inheritors with Christ, and among ourselves we are brethren, and all brethren to Christ. And therefore we ought to join altogether in one prayer, and to be glad one to help another, both in word and deed to the uttermost of our power.

Furthermore, this is a great comfort for us, to know that all the Church and congregation of Christ doth pray for us; and that all the treasures of God's riches, that is to say, Christ himself, the kingdom of heaven, the holy Gospel, the sacraments, and the prayers of all godly men, be common to us all. For whensoever any godly man requireth any thing of God, he also requireth the same for us; for no man ought to pray for himself alone. And this is a great consolation for all Christian people; for the Scripture saith that the prayer of one just man may do much with God. And, therefore, when many just and godly men do make their supplications unto God with one accord, we may be sure that their prayers are heard. And this is the plain sense and exposition of this fourth petition.

Now, I pray you diligently to remember those things, that when you are asked this question, How understand you the fourth petition? you may answer, "God doth sufficiently provide for us meat and living without our desire; nevertheless we desire him to grant us; that we may know that we have all things at his hands, and that we may give to him due thanks for the same." And if further any man will ask you, What is meant by this word, "Our daily bread?" answer, that "By daily bread is understood all things necessary for our living, as meat, drink, clothes, house, land, cattle, money, household stuff, a good wife, obedient children, trusty servants, good governors, a well-ordered commonwealth, common peace and tranquillity, seasonable weather, wholesome air, health of body, constant friends, honest neighbours, and such like things, whereby we may lead in this world a godly and quiet life."

"And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

You have heard how we desire of God our Father, that, forasmuch as he is the only and true Maker of heaven and earth, he will vouchsafe

to preserve and nourish us his children; and that we ought to trust for this thing of no creature, but of God only. Now followeth the fifth petition, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." To the intent that you may the better understand this petition, you shall call to your remembrance that lesson which you learned a little before; that is to say, that Christ hath promised that he will give us all things, which we ask in faith and true belief. Now true faith is grounded upon the promise of God, and it is not builded but upon the foundation of his word. Wherefore, if we will ask any thing in true belief, we must ask as the word of God teacheth us, and we must take sure hold of God's promise declared in the Scripture. For it is not faith to believe our own fantasies or dreams, of the which God hath nothing spoken or taught. As if a man would believe that by God's help he should not be drowned, although he leapt into the sea, this were no faith, but a temptation of God, a very heinous sin; coming doubtless of the devil, who on this wise tempted our Master Christ, when he set him upon the pinnacle of the temple in the holy city, and said unto him, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down." But Christ refused to do so, and answered thus: "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Now there is not in the whole Scripture any one promise that God will help me, if I do any such act; but if we do such things as God hath commanded us, he hath made us many promises that he will help and succour us, in all our necessities and troubles. By the which promises he hath declared his fatherly love towards us, intending thereby to stir and provoke us to run unto him in all our cares and needs. Wherefore, it is our bounden duty to call upon his name in all our necessities, to trust upon his promises, to put him, as it were, in remembrance of them, and earnestly to desire him to perform the same. But among all other promises, this

promise is specially to be remembered where Christ promiseth thus: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses¹." In the which promise, Christ doth not only offer to us remission of our sins, and such things as appertain to everlasting life; but also he promiseth us hereby peace and quietness, in this transitory life, with concord and a loving heart towards our neighbour. And according to this promise, Christ our master hath taught us to pray after this sort: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." For it were not reasonable, not agreeing to justice, that we should require God to forgive us our trespasses against him, when we are not minded to forgive our neighbours their offences against us. Nor would God ever hear us, if we should so pray. For if we have causes why we will not forgive our neighbours, then surely God hath both more and more weighty causes, wherefore he will not forgive us. So that if God were minded to forgive us our sins, yet if we are not minded to forgive our neighbours, he would stay, and (as it were) call again this his purpose, by the reason of our uncharitableness and disobedience, as Christ himself doth plainly teach us, by the example of the servant, which after he had his debt forgiven him, was compelled to pay all the money whereof before he was discharged by his master's pardon, because he would not forgive his fellow². Wherefore, accustom yourselves gladly to forgive them that have offended you. Be not desirous to revenge your own quarrels, and then your heavenly Father will also forgive you. "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath³." For it is not possible that any man can truly believe that God hath forgiven him his sins, when he himself is not willing to forgive his

¹ Matt. vi. 14, 15.² Matt. xviii.³ Ephes. iv. 26.

neighbour. Wherefore, God our heavenly Father, did not intend to hurt or hinder us, when he said, that he would not forgive us, except we did forgive others; and if we forgive our neighbours their offences, that, then, he will also forgive us. But God did knit this condition to this promise, for our great wealth and benefit; for under these words there lieth hid great comfort for troubled consciences, whereunto if you will listen diligently, you shall know the singular goodness of God, and his fatherly love towards you. It is not unknown to God, how hard a thing it is for us to believe, that God freely and for his mere mercy, will pardon us when we have offended him. Wherefore, he hath added to his promise this token, whereby we might be assured that he hath forgiven us; that is to say, when we forgive our neighbours. Let us, therefore, lay aside all anger and displeasure, and accustom ourselves gladly to forgive our neighbours, that thereby we may the sooner believe, that our Lord God hath forgiven us. For God is much more inclined and ready to mercy than we mortal men be.

Moreover, the forgiving of our neighbour doth not only stablish our faith that our sins are forgiven of God, but also it doth nourish peace, concord, and brotherly charity. For if we should not much forbear and forgive one another, but every man should study how he might be revenged of his neighbour, for every matter, by force or else by subtilty, then we should never have measure nor end of cluding, scolding, laying in watch one of another, deceiving, going to law, fighting, and such like. Then farewell all quietness, peace, concord and good order. And this revenging of ourselves should greatly hurt us, both in our body, soul, good name, honour, and riches, as experience daily teacheth us. For oftentimes we see that while a man goeth to law for two or three crowns, he spendeth twenty or thirty. And many men are killed themselves while they go about to strike or wound others. Wherefore, it is much

better one of us to forgive another, than to provoke and increase the anger and malice one of another. And although we lose part of our goods thereby, yet we shall have this great winning thereby, that God will forgive us even as we forgive them that trespass against us. And note well, that Christ doth not teach us to say, *Forgive us our gross sins*, but *"Forgive us our debts, or trespasses."* For it is a greater benefit to have our debts and all offences forgiven than to have our gross sins forgiven us. For that we properly call sin, which we do directly against God's commandment. But that is called debt or offence when we ought to do good, and do it not, or do good imperfectly, although directly we do no hurt to any man. And we Christian-men, although by baptism we are made the children of God, and receive the Holy Ghost, who doth help us to withstand all evil, and to do that which is good; and although we commit no gross sin, nor break the law by any outward act, yet we do not perfectly fulfil God's commandments, nor do all things which we ought to do. And when we do not all things which we ought to do, then ever we are debtors or sinners in some thing. But God forgiveth us these debts for Christ's sake, when we pray to him, therefore, and forgive our neighbours for his sake. And this is the cause why we cannot be justified, or delivered from sin, death, and hell, by our own works. For inasmuch as our good works are ever imperfect, and have need of pardon, we must needs be redeemed by the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ. Wherefore, inasmuch as we believe that God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us all our sins and debts, we ought also earnestly to pray that he will deal with us according to our faith, and *"forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."* And this is the plain understanding of this fifth petition, which we daily and hourly ought to make to God. And now I pray you,

that you will diligently record the true meaning of this petition. And when you are asked this question, How understand you the fifth petition? Answer and say, "Herein we desire that our heavenly Father will not look upon our sins, and for them, cast us away. For we have not deserved those great gifts and grace which we desire at God's hands, nor are we worthy to have the same, but we desire God, that although we daily offend him, and deserve grievous punishments for our sins, yet he, of his mere grace and mercy, will hear our prayers and freely forgive us our offences. And we offer ourselves for his sake from the bottom of our hearts to forgive them that have offended us."

"And lead us not into temptation."

Now you have heard how in the fifth petition we desire God to give us all those things which our Lord Jesus Christ hath procured for us, by his passion, death, and glorious resurrection; that is to say, forgiveness of our sins, and all thereto belonging, even as we forgive them that have offended us. Now therefore followeth the sixth petition, in the which we pray, that God will give us all those things, which concern our sanctification; that is to say, we desire that God will vouchsafe to send us the Holy Ghost, who may assist us in our continual battle against sin, the flesh, the world, and the devil; that in all temptations and skirmishes with the same, we may manfully withstand them, and overcome them. For this we desire, when we say, "And suffer us not to be led into temptation." And to the intent that you may the better understand this petition, you shall first diligently learn this lesson,—that although sin is forgiven us by Christ, yet it is not wholly purged or driven out of us, but sin yet sticketh fast in our flesh, which doth tempt and provoke us to do against God's commandments. For you have already learned by the ten commandments, what sin

is, and what is very ungodliness, to the intent you may eschew it. Also you have learned in your creed, that God doth forgive us our sins, and doth no more condemn us for the same, when we believe in the Son of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ. But yet; nevertheless, we feel the temptation of sin, which cleaveth to us like glue. And that this is true, every one of you doth feel in yourselves by daily experience. For when you grudge to do that thing which your parents command you to do, then sin tempteth you, and provoketh you to stubbornness and disobedience towards your father and mother. But yield not you to this temptation; but obey your father and mother, as God hath commanded you. Likewise when you see other-men have any thing which pleaseth you so well, that you would fain have the same, then sin tempteth and moveth you, either by force or by stealth, or else by some crafty means, to pick it from them, and so to deceive your neighbour. But it is your part to withstand this temptation, and to keep God's commandment, which saith, "Thou shalt not steal." And after this sort we are tempted in the other commandments of God also, and tried whether we will be obedient to them or not. But we must strive against temptation, and manfully withstand the same, that we do nothing against God's commandment. Now when we will resist temptations, and not obey the same, but keep the commandments of God, then we must have the help and assistance of the Holy Ghost. For without the Holy Ghost no man can be righteous and good. And God doth give the Holy Ghost to all of them which do believe with all their heart in Jesus Christ our Lord. For by this token St. Paul teacheth us to know that we have the Holy Ghost. "No man," saith St. Paul, "can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." And St. John, in his first Epistle writeth thus,

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God¹." Wherefore, believe with all your hearts that Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, died and rose again for you; that he hath purchased forgiveness of sins and everlasting life for you; and that he is so your Lord, that you shall be sure to dwell with him, in everlasting life.

Furthermore, you shall believe that Christ doth give you the Holy Ghost, who doth sanctify you, help and assist you, that you be not led into temptation, but that you may obey God, as you have heard in the ten commandments. And as long as we live here upon earth, we must not look to be void of temptations. For all our life in this world is subject to divers temptations. Sometimes the flesh tempteth us; sometimes the false and deceitful world; sometimes the devil tempteth us, who hath ever had a most fervent desire to do us hurt. And all the temptations of these our enemies do aim at this point, to bring us to do against God's commandments. But it is our part manfully to withstand such temptations, that we assent not to any evil. And yet we are not able to withstand these our enemies, unless God help us by the Holy Ghost. Wherefore, whensoever we are tempted to do any thing against God's commandments, there is no better remedy than to call for God's help, and to say, as Christ taught us, "Good Lord, suffer us not to be led into temptation." For when we do so, God heareth our prayers; he sendeth the Holy Ghost, and helpeth us, that we be not led into temptation.

And now, that you may the better withstand such temptations, you shall here learn, that there be three kinds of temptations. The first is the temptation of the flesh, as when we are tempted to do any thing which is pleasant to the flesh, and yet it is sinful. As when the flesh doth provoke us to lechery, adultery, drunkenness, and such like. Or when we are tempted

¹ John v. 1.

to leave any thing undone, which is painful and grievous to the flesh, and yet of itself is holy and righteous; as when we suffer afflictions against our will; when we do not gladly fast; when we do not gladly give alms, fearing lest we shall lack our own selves, and not have enough to maintain our pride and pleasures. The second temptation is of the world, as when through evil we are corrupted in our own living, and provoked to follow naughty examples. Also when we swerve from that which is right and honest, for fear of persecution, displeasure, indignation, or threatening of men. Or when men through their falsehood, malice, or craft, do move us to anger, envy, or hatred. The third temptation is of the devil, as when we feel in our hearts sudden and vehement motions to do evil, and yet neither the flesh nor the world doth provoke us to the same. But evil thoughts do so suddenly come into our minds, that we ourselves do not well know from whence they came. Such evil thoughts, no doubt of it, come from the devil. For the devil is a spirit whom we can neither feel nor see. Wherefore he can set our hearts on fire so suddenly, that we shall not know from whence such sudden fire and sparks do come. Also when the flesh and the world do tempt us, then Satan also taketh occasion thereby to enter in at the gate, which they have set open for him, and maketh so strong, that it is hard for us to withstand and overcome the same. And all these temptations are against God's commandments. Wherefore, hereby you shall learn to know what is temptation. For when any thing cometh into your mind, by the which you are provoked to do against God's commandments, that is temptation. Wherefore beware you do not the same, but desire of God help and assistance against temptation. For in this standeth a Christian and holy life, that as our sins are forgiven us by Christ, so we ought ever to withstand sin, that we suffer it not to enter into us, or to reign over us. For

what a monstrous thing should Christian religion be, if we, that are Christian men, (who confess sin to be against God, and desire God to forgive us our sins), should continue still and walk in sin, after that God most mercifully hath forgiven us the same.

Also we may easily withstand temptation and sin, if we believe truly, and pray earnestly. For we have learned in the doctrine of faith, that we cannot be righteous, pure, and holy of ourselves, but the Holy Ghost doth purify, cleanse, and hallow us. And if we believe this stedfastly, then we ought to pray with a fervent spirit, and say thus, "Lord, our heavenly Father, we beseech thee suffer us not to be led into temptation." And if we thus pray, then God will hear us, and will give us strength against him that tempteth us, and against his temptation. For a Christian man's life is a continual war upon earth, and so long as we live in this world, we may not look to have peace or quietness; but as in the sea one wave cometh after another, so in this world one temptation followeth another: so that when we have overcome one temptation, by and by another is at hand, peradventure greater than the first.

Wherefore, in this sixth petition, we do not pray thus:—"Oh heavenly Father, grant that we may have no temptations;" but say thus, "Oh, heavenly Father, suffer us not to be led into temptation." To be led into temptation, is when God suffereth the greatness of temptation so to grow that we be not able to overcome the same, but be so deceived and blinded by the Devil, that sin is pleasant unto us, and we see nothing in the same but pleasure and profit, and consider not the anger of God due for sin, nor the poison that lieth hid in the same, nor the pain that shall follow thereof; and so we persnade ourselves that we have no more need to watch or fight against sin, but do consent to temptation, and yield ourselves into the hands of our enemies. This Christ calleth to be led into temptation, as in our common speech we are wont

to say, "This led me," or this brought me into this mischief. And that we be not led into temptation, it is our part earnestly to pray to God, as Christ hath taught and commanded us. So ye perceive the misery of this transitory and mortal life, that it is full of temptations and snares. But we must not give place to them, but withstand them, and live godly. But this we are not able to do, except the Holy Ghost sanctify us, and make us pure and holy. Wherefore we ought to pray to God that he will give us the Holy Ghost, and that he will vouchsafe to assist and strengthen us, that we may withstand all temptations, and keep his holy commandments. And this is the meaning and plain understanding of this sixth petition. Wherefore, I pray you diligently learn the same, that when you are asked, How understand you the sixth petition? you may answer, "God tempteth no man. But here we pray that God will keep and defend us; that the devil, the world, and the flesh deceive us not, and lead us not into ungodliness, idolatry, blasphemy, desperation, or other horrible sins. And although we are tempted with these sins, yet we desire God that at length we may overcome them, and triumph over them by the help and assistance of the Holy Ghost."

"But deliver us from evil. Amen."

You have heard in the sixth petition, how we sue to God, that he will rule, govern, and strengthen us by his Holy Ghost, that we may be able to fight against sin, to withstand all the perilous temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to overcome them, so that we may become righteous and holy. Now followeth the seventh and last petition, in the which we desire God to deliver us from this perilous and continual battle, and from all other evils, that this great danger may not continue for ever, but that at length we may have some end thereof. And for this Christ taught us to pray, and to say,

Good Lord, deliver us from evil. And now to the intent that you may the better understand this petition, you shall know that this word, Evil, doth not signify in this place only sin against God's commandments, and unbelief against God's promise, but here it betokeneth all kinds of adversity and affliction, which we suffer for our sins, either in our bodies, souls, honours or riches, as ignorance, blindness of mind, sadness, sorrow, trouble of conscience, faintness of the heart, sickness of the body, poverty, slanders, despising, reproaches, persecutions, battle, sedition, hunger, pestilence, and all plagues, with the which Satan doth afflict and trouble us, either by himself, or by the wicked world, whereof he is prince and governor. The which evils no man can number or rehearse, for they are without number and increase daily more and more. For the devil in this latter time doth daily more and more rage against the true Church and people of God, forasmuch as he perceiveth that his kingdom draweth to an end, and a short time remaineth until the day of judgment come, and his everlasting damnation. Furthermore, the world waxeth daily worse and worse and men wax more wild and unruly. Sin, wickedness, malice, and craftiness, increase above all measure, so much that it is not possible to number the great floods of evils which have almost overflowed the world. Among the which evils, there is such blindness and corruption of judgment, that there are few who can rightly discern what is good and what is evil. As for example, many men when they are sick, judge bodily sickness to be a great evil, whereas, indeed, (if they would take it as they ought to do), it is to them an occasion of great goodness; who, perchance, (if they should have continual health) would forget God, and run headlong into dangerous perils, both of body and soul, from the which evils, their bodily diseases do stay and hinder them. And so their bodily sickness, worketh in them their soul's

health and salvation. Also many men set all their mind upon riches and wealth of this world, which makes them proud and high-minded, full of revenge, idle and slothful, pitiless to the poor, and stubborn both towards God and their neighbour, to put their trust in themselves, and to follow bodily pleasures, in rioting, surfeiting, and banqueting, whereof ensueth divers diseases and sicknesses, whereas if they had been poor men, they would have laboured for their living and should have lived much more temperately, healthfully, quietly and godly. And many there are who very impatiently take adversity, and murmur against God, when their worldly devices come not to pass after their minds, and many times they know not what danger they should have come unto, if God had not hindered their purpose, so that we know full little what is for us or against us, what is good or ill, but as we are taught by the word of God. And, therefore, we do not desire God to deliver us from this or that particular, or special evil, but we are taught to pray to God, with these short words and sighings of spirit, that God will vouchsafe to help us, not as we shall think good (who do not well know what is good, or what is ill for us,) but as it shall please him, and as he shall judge profitable for us, not prescribing or appointing unto him either time, place, or manner, of helping or delivering of us. "For," as St. Paul saith, "we know not what we should pray for, as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered¹." Nevertheless, let not this saying of St. Paul discourage us from praying. For God is not so ignorant, that he needeth that we should express our particular requests unto him. For he knoweth what we want, before we open our mouths to pray to him. Wherefore Christ in the Gospel teacheth us this lesson, "When ye pray," saith Christ, "use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do;

¹ Rom. viii. 26.

for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him¹."

Now, forasmuch as the evils of this present life are so many, that we can neither number them, know them, nor rightly judge of them, (as I have heretofore declared,) therefore our Master Christ, who forbiddeth us to use many words in our prayers, hath, as it were, knit up together in one bundle, all the plagues and adversities that can happen unto us in this world, and hath taught us to say this short prayer, "Good Lord, deliver us from evil." As though he should say thus:—Be not discouraged from praying, although you perfectly know not all the kinds of evil from the which you desire to be delivered; but only say these few words, Deliver us from evil, and by and by your heavenly Father knoweth from what thing he ought to deliver you, and will gladly do it. Now, you see how good and merciful is God our heavenly Father, who so much loveth us, and hath so fatherly a care for us, that he seeth what we want, and what evils he should deliver us from, before we begin to ask. And he requireth not that we should use many words, but only that from the deepness of our hearts we should call upon him, and do him this honour; that is to say, to ask all things of him, to take him for our only God, and to trust assuredly that he will hear us. Therefore, learn perfectly this lesson, that God willeth and requireth of us, that we, in all necessities and dangers that may happen unto us, should call to him for help, and put our trust and confidence in him alone, and in no man or creature besides him. For the prophet Jeremiah saith, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord²." And although men do oftentimes help and succour us, yet it is not men

¹ Matt. vi. 7, 8.

² Jer. xvii. 5.

that do it, but it is God that worketh these things by men, as by his instruments whom he hath chosen for that purpose. But when God will not help us, then there is no man that is able to deliver us. If we have any wrong done unto us, then if it please God to succour us, he doeth it by his judges and common officers, whom he hath ordained for that purpose. But if he be not minded to deliver us, then all the men in the world cannot help us. Likewise when we are sick, if God's pleasure is not to make us whole, what can all physicians and medicines avail us? But if he is willing to make us whole again, he worketh this thing by physicians and medicines, which he hath ordained for the same use. Our duty is, therefore, in all our needs to call upon God, to ask help of him, to confess that all goodness cometh from him, and to make him only the Author and chief Giver of all the good things that we have, and to thank him for the same. Nevertheless, we must also give due honour to God's instruments and means, by whom he worketh his benefits in us.

Furthermore, mark diligently this lesson also, that we are not taught in this petition to say, Keep us from evil, but Deliver us from evil. And in desiring God to deliver us from evil, we do confess, (as the truth is in deed,) that as long as we live in this miserable world, we are wrapped in and subject to all kinds of evils, and that we are not able to deliver ourselves therefrom. And the well and head, out of which all these evils do spring, is original sin, in the which we were conceived and born in our mother's womb, whereby man's reason is so blinded, that of himself he cannot know God, nor his word. And man's will also by this sin is so poisoned, that he doth not obey the will of God, nor keep his commandments. Now because man's reason is blinded, it is easy for the devil to lead man to all errors, as idolatry, heresies, and to all kind of superstitious and false doctrine. And these offences God doth punish with divers and grievous plagues, as with pride, envy,

contention, detraction, slandering, lying, railing, trouble and unquietness of conscience, fear and pensiveness of the mind, and such like; which vices so torment and gnaw our hearts, that they daily waste and consume us. And hereof ensue divers diseases, sicknesses, and infirmities, and at length death itself. Also, when man's will is not ruled by God's law, but followeth his own affections and lusts, then he runneth headlong into all kind of gross and horrible sin, as to treason, sedition, adulteries, theft, extortion, bribery, beguiling and deceiving his neighbour, to pride, envy, anger, gluttony, brawling, fighting, and manslaughter. And because God of his justice cannot suffer such grievous sins unpunished, therefore he suffereth the devil sometimes to infect the air, sometimes to stir up great and dangerous tempests and storms, sometimes he permitteth him to destroy our houses, cattle, and riches, with fire, or water. Again, God suffereth him sometimes to have such power over us for our sins, that some he maketh to run mad, some he causeth to drown themselves, some to cut their own throats, some to hang themselves. For this is Satan's chief study, to drive men to such fear, trouble, and anguish of mind, that through pensiveness and heaviness of heart, he may bring them to desperation. And this is his only intent and study, to bring as many as he can to everlasting damnation.

Now you have heard into how great and horrible evils we are brought by original sin, so that every moment we are in danger to be drowned with the raging floods thereof. Wherefore, surely, we have most need continually to cry to our heavenly Father, desiring him to deliver us from so great perils and evils. For we cannot offer unto God a more acceptable sacrifice, than by calling upon his holy name to acknowledge him for our God, and to give him this praise, that he it is who is both able and willing to deliver us from all our miseries. Furthermore, you shall yet learn here another lesson,

worthy to be noted and remembered, which is this; that in this request we desire not God utterly to destroy all those evils, that do vex and trouble us, and so to put them clear away (which for a time we must suffer for our sins,) that they may remain no longer in this world; but we desire God to deliver us from the said evil, that is to say, that after we have suffered evil by some space of time in this life, and have been proved and tried by the fire of adversity, that then (when it shall seem good to our most merciful Father), he will deliver us from the said evils, that we perish not in them. For seeing that we have brought ourselves into these miseries, we must patiently suffer them for a time, because they are punishments due for our sin, which we most worthily have deserved. And although our heavenly Father, doth most mercifully forgive us our offences, yet he doth not take sin clean away, but during this life we fight against sin, until we die, and so be tried and proved, whether we love him and his commandments, better than our own wills and pleasures. Also our merciful Father layeth on our backs divers afflictions and adversities, to pull down our proud and high stomachs, and to mortify our flesh, that we may be like Christ, who by the cross overcame death, sin, and the devil, and so entered into everlasting glory. So that in this petition we must learn both wisdom and patience; wisdom to beware of sin when it provoketh us, and in no wise to follow the same; patience to suffer willingly the cross and such afflictions as God shall send unto us, and to pray God with fervent desire, that he suffer us not to perish in the same, but mercifully to defend us, until such time as it shall please him clearly to deliver us, which shall be when we shall die, and by God's power be raised from death to life, and be delivered from all manner of evils.

Therefore, when we say in the Lord's Prayer, "Deliver us from evil," we chiefly desire God to send us a good death, that then, above all other

times, we may be delivered from all evils. Forasmuch as in that hour we be in the most danger of all evils and temptations. Wherefore it is most necessary for us, even from our tender age, to pray to our Lord, that at that last hour chiefly he will be good and gracious unto us, delivering us from all manner of evil. So that death may be to us as no evil, but a clear acquittance from all evils. And this the Lord's prayer, we must ever end with this word, "Amen." Which is as much as to say, Surely I trust it shall be so. And it is not enough to say Amen with our tongue only, but also Amen must be in our heart, and continue and tarry there, that is to say, we ought to believe surely and constantly that our prayer is heard, and that our heavenly Father will grant us our petitions. For so Christ hath promised, that whatsoever we ask the Father in his name, it shall be given to us. And for that intent Christ confirmeth this his promise with an oath, saying, Amen.—Now you have heard the true and plain exposition of the seventh and last petition, which I pray you to place in you memories, that when you are demanded, Now understand you the seventh petition? you may readily answer: "Herein we desire our heavenly Father, to deliver us from all evil and peril, both of body, soul, land, cattle, and riches. And that when we shall be on our death-bed, he will then grant us a good hour, that we may depart out of this vale of misery in his favour, and from this transitory life enter into life everlasting. The which God grant us all! Amen."

THE END.

SERIOUS CALL
TO A
DEVOUT AND HOLY LIFE:

ABRIDGED FROM
THE ABRIDGMENT OF THE ORIGINAL WORK OF THE
REV. WILLIAM LAW, M.A.

By A LALMAN.

"Lord, so teach us to obey our days, that we may apply our hearts
unto wisdom."—Psalm 112.

"That wisdom, of which the fear of God is the beginning, and of which
the blessing of God is the end and the reward."

LORD C. ARENDON'S ESSAYS.



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A
SERIOUS CALL
TO A
DEVOUT AND HOLY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Concerning the nature and extent of Christian Devotion.

DEVOTION is neither private nor public prayer; but prayers, whether private or public, are particular parts of devotion. Devotion signifies a life given or devoted to God. He therefore is the devout man, who lives no longer to his own will, or the way and spirit of the world, but to the sole will of God; who considers God in every thing; who makes all the parts of his common life parts of piety, and lives under such rules as are conformable to the glory of God.

We readily acknowledge that God alone is to be the rule and measure of our prayers, and that in them we are to look wholly unto him, and act wholly for him; that we are to pray, in such a manner, for such things, and for such ends, as are suitable to his glory.

Now let any one but find out the reason why he is thus to be strictly pious in his prayers, and he will find as strong a reason why he should be equally pious in all the other parts of his life; for there is not the least shadow of reason, why we should make

God the rule and measure of our prayers, and pray according to his will, but what proves it equally necessary for us to look wholly unto God, and make him the rule and measure of all the other actions of our life. Any way of life, any employment of our talents, whether of our parts, our time, or our money, that is not strictly according to the will of God, or for ends suitable to his glory, is as great an absurdity, as prayers that are not according to the will of God.

Were it not our duty to live by reason, to devote all the actions of our lives to God; were it not necessary to walk before him in wisdom and holiness, doing every thing in his name and for his glory, there would be no excellency or wisdom in the most heavenly prayers. As sure, therefore, as there is any wisdom in praying for the Spirit of God, so sure it is that we are to make that Spirit the rule of all our actions.

It is for want of knowing, or at least considering this, that we see such a mixture of every thing ridiculous in the lives of many people. You see them strict as to the times and places of devotion; but when the service of the church is over, they are like those who seldom or never go there. This is the reason why they are the jest and scorn of careless and worldly people; not because they are really devoted to God, but because they appear to have no other devotion but that of occasional prayers.

If you ask a man who is very fearful of missing prayers, but who spends the rest of his time by *humour or chance*; who is the companion of the silliest people in their most silly pleasures; allows himself in foolish hatreds and resentments against particular persons, without considering that he is "to love his neighbour" if you ask such a man why he never puts conversation, his time, and fortune, under the *re of religion*, he has no more to say for himself, that he lives like the rest of the world

Now the whole tenor of Scripture lies as directly against such a life, as against debauchery and intemperance. He that lives in such a course of idleness and folly, lives no more according to the religion of Jesus Christ, than he that lives in gluttony and intemperance. And yet if you were to tell such a person that there was no occasion for so much constancy at prayers, and that he might without any harm to himself neglect the service of the Church, as too many do, he would think you were no Christian: but if you only tell him that he may live as the generality of the world does; that he may spend his time and money as people of fashion do; that he may conform to the follies and frailties of the multitude, and gratify his passions and propensities as most people do; he will never suspect that you can want a Christian spirit. If, however, he was to read all the New Testament from the beginning to the end, he would find his course of life condemned in every page of it: nay, it is obvious to the meanest capacity, that nothing can be more absurd, than wise, sublime and heavenly prayers, added to a life of folly and vanity, where neither time nor money are under the direction of the wisdom and heavenly temper of our prayers.

The short of the matter is this: either reason and religion prescribe rules and ends to all the ordinary actions of our life, or they do not. If they do, then it is as necessary to govern all our actions by these rules, as it is necessary to worship God: for if religion teaches how we are to conduct ourselves in common life; how we are to be disposed towards all people; how we are to behave towards the sick, the poor, the old, and destitute: if it tells us whom we are to regard with particular esteem; if it tells us how we are to treat our enemies, and how we are to deny ourselves, he must be very weak that can think these parts of religion are not to be observed.

with as much exactness as any doctrines that relate to prayers.

The religion or devotion which is to govern the ordinary actions of our life, is to be found in almost every verse of Scripture. Our blessed Lord and his Apostles earnestly enforce doctrines that relate to common life; they call us to differ in every part of our conduct from the spirit and way of the world; to live in holy fear; to take up our daily cross; to deny ourselves; to seek the blessedness of poverty of spirit; to live in the deepest humility; to rejoice in worldly sufferings; to forbear injuries; to forgive and bless our enemies, and to love mankind as God loveth them; to give up our whole hearts and affections to God, and to strive to enter through the strait gate, into a life of eternal glory.

This is the common doctrine which our blessed Lord taught, in order to make it the life of all Christians. If then we are to be wise and holy, we can be so no otherwise than by renouncing every thing that is foolish and vain in every part of our common life: if we are to follow Christ, it must be in our common way of spending every day; so that Christianity is so far from leaving us to live according to the ordinary ways of life, conforming to the folly of customs, and gratifying the passions which the spirit of the world delights in; is so far from indulging us in any of these things, that all its virtues, which it makes necessary to salvation, are only so many ways of living above, and contrary to the world in all the common actions of our life.

But though it is thus plain, that this, and this alone, is Christianity, viz. an open, uniform, and visible practice of all these virtues; yet it is as plain, that there is as little of this to be found, even amongst such as are usually called good sort of people. You see them often at church, and pleased fine preachers; but look into their lives, and

you see them just the same sort of people that others are, who make no pretence to devotion. They have the same taste for the world, the same worldly cares, and fears, and joys; they have the same turn of mind, the same weak and ridiculous desires; they have the same self-love and indulgence, the same foolish friendships and groundless hatreds, the same fondness for diversions, the same idle dispositions, and the same trifling ways of spending their time.

CHAPTER II.

An inquiry into the reason why the generality of Christians fall so short of the holiness and devotion of Christianity.

It may now be reasonably inquired, how it comes to pass, that the lives, even of the better sort of people, are thus strangely contrary to the principles of Christianity.

But before I give a direct answer to this, I desire it may also be inquired, how it comes to pass that swearing is so common a vice amongst Christians? Amongst men, this sin is so frequent, that many are guilty of it through the whole course of their lives, swearing more or less, just as it happens; some constantly, others only now and then, as it were by chance. Now I ask, how comes it that men are guilty of so gross and profane a sin as this? There is neither ignorance nor human infirmity to plead for it. It is against an express commandment, and the most plain doctrine of our blessed Saviour. Do but find the reason why men live in this notorious vice, and then you will have found the reason, why the generality, even of the better sort of people, live in many other respects so contrary to Christianity.

Now the reason of common swearing is, because men have not so much as the intention to please God

in all their actions; for let a man have but so much piety as to wish and intend to please him in all the actions of his life, as the happiest and best thing in the world, and then he will never swear more. It will be as impossible for him to swear, whilst he feels this intention within himself, as it is impossible for a man who intends to please his prince, to abuse him to his face.

It seems but a small and necessary part of piety to have such a sincere intention as this; and he has no reason to look upon himself as a disciple of Christ, who is not thus far advanced in piety. And yet it is merely for want of this degree of piety that you see such a mixture of sin and folly in the lives, even of the better sort of people. It is for want of this intention, that you see men who profess religion, yet living in habits of swearing and sensuality; it is for want of this intention, that you see women who profess devotion, yet living in folly and vanity, wasting their time in pleasure and idleness.

It was this general intention that made the primitive Christians such eminent examples of piety. And if you will here stop, and ask yourself why you are not as pious as the primitive Christians were, your own heart will tell you that it is neither through ignorance nor inability, but purely because you never thoroughly intended it. You observe the same Sunday's worship as they did, and you are strict in it, because it is your intention so to be; and when you are as fully determined to please God in all your actions, you will find it as possible as to be strictly exact in the service of the church.

Let a tradesman have this intention, and his common business will be a course of wise and reasonable actions, made holy to God by being done in obedience to his will and pleasure; he will buy and sell, ~~use~~, by so doing, he can do some good to himself others. But then, as nothing can please God but ~~the~~ wise, holy, and reasonable, he will consider,

not what arts, or methods, or application, will soonest make him richer and greater than his brethren, or remove him from a life of labour to a life of ease and pleasure; but he will consider what arts, or methods, or application, will make worldly business most acceptable to God, and make a life of trade a life of piety, holiness, and devotion. This will be the spirit of every tradesman, whenever it is his intention to please God in all his actions, as the best and happiest thing in the world. •And, on the other hand, whoever is not of this spirit and temper in his trade or profession, and does not endeavour to render it subservient to a wise and holy life, may be assured that he has not this intention; and yet, without it, who can be said to be a follower of Jesus Christ?

Again, let the gentleman of birth and fortune have but this intention, and you will see how it will carry him from every appearance of evil to every act of piety and goodness. He cannot live by chance, or as humour and fancy direct him, because he knows nothing can please God but a wise and regular course of life. He cannot live in idleness and indulgence, in gaming, in intemperance, in vain expenses and extravagance, because these things cannot be turned into means of piety and holiness, nor made so many parts of a religious life.

As he thus removes from all appearance of evil, so he hastens and aspires after every species of goodness. He does not ask what is allowable and pardonable, but what is commendable and praiseworthy. He does not ask whether God will forgive the folly of our lives, the madness of our pleasures, the vanity of our expenses, and the careless consumption of our time; but he asks whether God is pleased with these things, or whether these are the appointed ways of gaining his favour. He does not inquire whether it be pardonable to hoard up money whilst the widow, the orphan, the sick, and the prisoner want to be relieved; whilst the poor labourer, or needy

artificer requires his fostering bounty, and stands in need of support or employment, towards procuring an honest maintenance for himself and family; but he asks whether it is the will of God that he should relieve these people, and whether he shall be called to an account at the last day for the neglect of this duty?

You see two persons, one of whom is regular in public and private prayer, the other is not. Now the reason of this is, not that one has strength and power to observe prayer, and the other has not; but the reason is, that one intends to please God in the duties of devotion, and the other has no thought or intention about it.

The case is the same in the right or wrong use of our time and money. You see one person throwing away his time in sleep and idleness, and his money in the most vain and unreasonable expenses. You see another careful of every day, dividing his hours by rules of reason and religion, and spending much money in works of charity. Now the difference is not owing to this, that one has strength and power to act in such a manner, and the other has not; but it is owing to this, that one intends to please God in the right use of his time, and the other has no intention about it.

I have chosen to explain this matter by appealing to this intention, because it makes the case so plain, and because every one may see it in the clearest light, and feel it in the strongest manner, only by looking into his own heart. For it is as easy for every person to know whether he intends to please God in all his actions, as for a servant to know whether this be his intention towards his master.

Here, therefore, let us judge ourselves sincerely; let us not blindly and vainly acquiesce in the common disorders of our lives, the vanity of our expenses, the folly of our diversions, and the wasting of our time, fancying that these are such imperfections as

we fall into through the unavoidable weakness and frailty of our nature; neither let us call upon ourselves as in a state of imperfection merely, but in a state that wants the first and most fundamental principle of Christianity, viz. an intent to please God in all our actions.

This doctrine does not suppose that we have no need of divine grace, or that it is in our power to be perfect. It only supposes, that through the want of a sincere intention to please God, we fall into such irregularities of life, as by the ordinary means of grace we should have power to avoid; and that we have not the perfection which our present state of grace makes us capable of, because we do not so much as intend to have it.

CHAPTER III.

Of the great danger and folly of not intending to be as eminent and exemplary as we can in the practice of all Christian virtues.

ALTHOUGH the goodness of God, and his mercies in Jesus Christ, are a sufficient assurance to us that he will be merciful to our unavoidable weaknesses and infirmities, that is, to such failings as are the effects of ignorance or surprise; yet we have no reason to expect the same mercy towards those sins which we live in, through a want of intention to avoid them.

You perhaps will say, that all people fall short of the perfection of the Gospel, and, therefore, you submit to your failings. But this is saying nothing to the purpose. For the question is not, whether Gospel perfection can be fully attained, but whether you come as near it as a sincere intention and careful diligence can carry you: whether you are not in a much lower state than you might be, if you sincerely

intended and carefully laboured to advance yourself in all Christian virtues.

The salvation of our souls is set forth in Scripture as a thing of difficulty, that requires all our diligence, that is to be worked out with fear and trembling. We are told that strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; that many are called, but few are chosen; and that many will miss of their salvation, who seem to have taken *some pains* about it, as evidently appears from these words, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." Now if salvation is only given to those who strive for it, then it is as reasonable for me to consider whether my course of life be a course of striving to obtain it, as to consider whether I am keeping any of the commandments.

If my religion is only a formal cold compliance with those modes of worship that are in fashion where I live; if it cost me no pains or trouble; if it lays me under no rules or restraints: if I have no sober thoughts, nor careful reflections about it, is it not great weakness to think that I am striving to enter in at the strait gate? If I am seeking every thing that can delight my senses, or regale my appetite, spending my time and fortune solely in pleasures, in diversions, and worldly enjoyments; a stranger to prayer and self-denial; how can it be said that I am working out my salvation with fear and trembling? And yet, if the way to heaven is narrow, and none can walk in it but those who strive, is it not necessary for me to consider whether the way I am in be narrow enough, or the labour I take be sufficient?

The sum of the matter is this: from the above-mentioned, and many other passages in Scripture, it seems plain that our salvation depends upon the *sincerity* of our endeavours to obtain it. Weak and *imperfect* men shall, notwithstanding their frailties

and defects, be received as having pleased God, if they have done their utmost to please him.

The rewards of charity, piety, and humility, will be given to those whose lives have been a careful labour to exercise these virtues in as high a degree as they could. We cannot offer to God the service of angels; we cannot obey him as man in a state of perfection could; but fallen men can do their best, and this is the perfection that is required of us. But if we stop short of this, for aught we know, we stop short of the mercy of God, and leave ourselves nothing to plead from the terms of the Gospel; for God has there made no promises of mercy to the slothful and negligent. It is for this reason that we are exhorted to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, because, unless our hearts and passions are eagerly bent upon the work of our salvation; unless holy fears animate our endeavours, and keep our consciences strict and tender about every part of our duty, constantly examining how we live, and how fit we are to die, we shall in all probability fall into a state of negligence, and be satisfied with such a course of life, as will never carry us to the rewards of heaven.

Now, what has been said is not intended to possess people's minds with a scrupulous anxiety and discontent in the service of God, but to fill them with a just fear of living in sloth and idleness, and in the neglect of such virtues as they will want at the day of judgment. It is only desiring them to be as apprehensive of their state, as humble in the opinion of themselves, and as fearful of falling short of happiness, as the great Apostle St. Paul was, when he wrote thus to the Philippians: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before—I press forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." And then he

adds, "Let us, therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded."

Now if the Apostle thought it necessary for those who were in his state of perfection to be thus minded, surely it is much more necessary for us to be like minded: for us who are born in the dregs of time, and live in that alarming period when wickedness and impiety, like some dreadful contagion, seem to have infected the whole globe. Oh, let us then be in earnest, and strive after such degrees of a holy and divine life, as we have not yet attained. Let not any one consider how much will make his present life easy, but how much will make him easy at the hour of death.

We see in worldly matters what a torment self-condemnation is, and how hardly a man is able to forgive himself, when he has fallen into calamity or disgrace purely by his own folly. How terrible then the pain of that self-condemnation will be, when a man shall find himself in the miseries of death under the severities of a self-condemning conscience, and charging all his distress upon the folly and madness of his own conduct, in opposition to all the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, and to all the instructions, calls, and warnings, both of God and man!

Let us approach the death-bed of a penitent, and attend to his last reflections on the life he is about to resign. A wealthy tradesman who lately died in his thirty-fifth year, addressed his surrounding friends nearly in the following terms; "I see," says he, "my friends, the tender concern you have for me, by the grief that appears in your countenances. You think how melancholy a case it is, for a young man in such flourishing business to be delivered up to death; and perhaps had I visited any of you in my condition, I should have had the same thoughts. But those things are now sunk into such mere *nothings*, that I have no name little enough to call them by. For in a few days or hours I am to find

myself in the presence of my Omniscient Judge. Can any words then sufficiently express the littleness of every thing else? Is there any dream so fatal as the dream of life? Is there any folly like the folly of our mortal state, which is too wise and busy to be at leisure for these reflections?

“When we consider death as a misery, we only think of it as a miserable separation from the enjoyments of this life. We seldom mourn over an old man who dies rich; but we lament the young who are taken away in the progress of their fortune.

“You yourselves look upon me with pity, not because I am going unprepared to meet the Judge of quick and dead, but because I am to leave a prosperous trade in the flower of my life. And yet what folly can be greater than this! for what is there miserable or dreadful in death but the consequences of it?

“Business, and pleasures, and enjoyments, seem great things to us, whilst we think of nothing else; but as soon as we add death to them they all sink into equal littleness, and the soul that is separated from the body no more laments the loss of business than the losing of a feast. When you are as near death as I am, you will know that all the different states of life, whether of youth or age, riches or poverty, greatness or meanness, signify no more to you, than whether you die in a poor or stately apartment. The greatness of things which follow death, makes all that goes before it sink into nothing.

“But, my friends, how am I surprised that I have not always had these thoughts! How strange it is that a little health or worldly business, should render us so regardless of these great things which are coming so fast upon us! What numbers of souls there are in my condition at this very time, surprised with a summons to the other world; some taken from their business, others from their pleasures, some from gaming-tables, others from their own fire-sides: and all seized at an hour when they thought nothing of

it ; frightened at the approach of death ; confounded at the vanity of all their labours, designs, and projects ; astonished at the folly of their past lives, and not knowing which way to turn their thoughts to find any comfort !

“ Oh, my friends ! bless God that you are not of this number ; that you have time and strength to employ yourself in such works of piety as may bring you peace at the last. Had I now a thousand worlds, I would give them all for one year more, that I might present unto God one year of devotion and good works, such as I never before so much as intended.

“ Perhaps when you consider that I have lived free from scandal and debauchery, and in the communion of the Church, you wonder to see me so full of remorse and self-condemnation ! But, alas ! what a poor thing it is to have lived only free from murder, theft, and adultery. You know, indeed, that I have never been reckoned a sot, but you are at the same time witnesses, and have been frequently the companions of my intemperance, sensuality, and indulgence.

“ How I am abashed and confounded when I reflect that, in the common business of life I have done every thing by the most prudent rules and methods that worldly wisdom could suggest, and have studied all the ways and means of being a gainer by all that I undertook ; when I consider how regular and wise I have been in small matters that have passed away like a dream, and how stupid and senseless I have lived, without any reflection, without any rule, in things of such eternal moment, as no heart can sufficiently conceive ! What pain do you think a man must feel, when his conscience lays all this folly to his charge ? Had I only my frailties and imperfections to lament at this time, I should lie here, humbly trusting in the mercies of God, through Christ my Redeemer. But alas ! how can I call a general disregard and thorough neglect of all religious improve-

ment a frailty and imperfection, when it was as much in my power to have been exact, careful, and diligent, in a course of piety, as in the business of my trade?

“Oh, my friends, a careless life, unconcerned and inattentive to the duties of religion, is so destitute of all excuse, so unworthy of the mercy of God, so disgraceful to the sense and reason of our minds, that I can hardly conceive a greater punishment than for a man to be thrown into the state that I am in, and to reflect upon it!”

This truly penitent man would have proceeded farther, but his mouth was closed by a convulsion, which never suffered him to finish his address.

Now, if every reader, or hearer, would imagine this person to have been some particular acquaintance, or relation of his own, and fancy that he saw and heard every thing which is here described; that he stood by the bedside when his poor friend lay in such distress and agony, it would in all probability teach him such wisdom as never entered into his heart before. If, in addition to this, he would consider how often he himself might have been surprised in the same state of negligence, and made an example to the rest of the world, this double reflection, both upon the distress of his friend and the goodness of God, who has preserved him from it, would in all likelihood soften his heart into holy dispositions, and make him turn the remainder of his life into a regular course of piety.

CHAPTER IV.

We can please God in no state of life, but by intending and devoting it to his honour and glory.

HAVING in the first chapter stated the general nature of devotion, and shown that it implies not any form of prayer, but a certain form of life, that is offered

to God, not at any particular times or places, but every where and in every thing; I shall now descend to some particulars, and show how we are to devote our labour and employments, our time and fortune unto God.

As a good Christian should consider every place as holy, because God is there; so he should look upon every part of his life as a matter of holiness, because it is to be offered unto God.

* The profession of a clergyman is a holy profession, because it is a ministration of holy things, an attendance at the altar. Clergymen must live wholly unto God in one particular way, that is, in the exercise of holy offices, in the ministration of prayers and sacraments, and a zealous distribution of spiritual goods. But men of other employments are, in their particular ways, as much obliged to act as the servants of God, and live wholly unto Him in their several callings. And this is the only difference between clergymen and people of other professions. As there is but one God and Father of us all, whose glory gives light and life to every thing that lives; whose presence fills all places; whose power supports all beings; whose providence governs all events; so all creatures, whether in heaven or on earth, whether they be thrones or principalities, men or angels, must, with one spirit, live wholly to the praise and glory of this one God and Father of us all.

Whatever, therefore, we do, we ought to do it with a design of pleasing God. The same state and temper of mind which makes our alms and devotions acceptable, must also make our labour or employments a proper offering unto Him. If a man labours to be rich, and pursues his business that he may raise himself to a state of pride and glory in the world, he is no longer serving God in his employment; he is acting under masters, and has no more title to a reward from God, than he who gives alms that he may be seen, or prays that he may be heard of men.

Most of the employments of life are in their own nature lawful; and all those which are so, may be made a substantial part of our duty to God, if we engage in them only so far, and for such ends as are suitable for beings that are to live *above* the world all the time they live *in* it. This is the only measure of our application to any worldly business; let it be what it will, or where it will, it must have no more of our hands, our hearts, or our time, than is consistent with an active and daily preparation of ourselves for another life. ✱

Now he that does not look at the things of this life in this degree of littleness, cannot be said either to feel or believe the great truths of Christianity. For if he thinks any thing important in human business compared with the things of eternity, can he properly be said to feel or believe those Scriptures, which represent this life, and all its concerns, as vapours, dreams, and shadows?

The husbandman, for instance, who tills the ground, is employed in an honest labour, that is necessary in life, and very capable of being made an acceptable service unto God; but if he labours not to serve any reasonable ends of life, but in order to gain more money to spend at an alehouse, thereby depriving his wife and children of their necessary support and maintenance, the honesty of his employment is lost as to him, and his labour becomes a wickedness.

A tradesman may justly think it is agreeable to the will of God for him to sell such things as are innocent in life, such as help both himself and others to a reasonable support, and enable them to assist those who want to be assisted. But if, instead of this, he trades only with regard to himself, without any other rule than that of his own *temper*; if it be his chief end to grow rich, that he may live in show and indulgence, and be able to retire from business to a life of idleness and luxury, his trade, as to him, loses all its innocency, and so far from being an ac-

ceptable service to God, is only a more plausible course of covetousness and self-love. Such a one lives no more to the glory of God, than he who plays and games for the same ends.

The apostle commands servants "to be obedient to their masters in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." This passage sufficiently shows that all Christians are to live wholly unto God in every state and condition, doing the work of their common calling in such a manner, and for such ends, as to make it part of their devotion or service to God. Without this rule, the most lawful employments become a sinful state of life. Take away this from a clergyman, and his holy profession serves only to expose him to a greater condemnation. Take away this from a tradesman, and his filthy warehouses are but so many dens of greediness and filthy lucre. Take away this from the gentleman, and the course of his life becomes a course of sensuality, pride, and vanity. Take away this from our tables, and all falls into gluttony and excess.

If, therefore, we desire to live unto God, we must be looking unto Him in all our actions, and doing every thing as his servants, always worshipping Him, though not with our lips, yet with the thankfulness of our hearts. We must not only send up petitions now and then to heaven, but must go through all our worldly business with new hearts and new minds, and by this means turn an earthly life into a preparation for a life of greatness and glory in the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER V.

Persons that are free from the necessities of labour and employments, are to consider themselves as devoted to God in a higher degree.

A GREAT part of the world are free from the necessities of labour, and have their time and fortune in

their own disposal. But as no one is to live in his *employment* according to his own humour, or for such ends as please his own fancy, but to do all his business in such a manner, as to make it a service unto God; so those who have no particular employment, are so far from being left at greater liberty to live to themselves, to pursue their own humour, and spend their time and fortune as they please, that they are under greater obligations of living wholly unto God in all their actions.

The freedom of their situation lays them under a greater necessity of always choosing and doing the best things. A slave can only live unto God in one particular way; that is, by a religious patience and submission in his state of slavery; but all ways of holy living, all kinds of virtue, lie open to those who are masters of themselves, their time, and their fortune.

It is, therefore, the duty of such persons to make a wise use of their liberty, to devote themselves to every species of virtue, to aspire after every thing that is holy and pious, to endeavour to be eminent in all good works, and to please God in the most perfect manner.

Now this piety, wisdom, and devotion, is either to go through every part of life, and extend to the use of every thing, or it is to go through no part of life. If we might forget ourselves, or forget God; if we might disregard our reason, and live by humour and fancy in any thing, or at any time or place, it would be as lawful to do the same in every thing, at every time, and in every place. If, therefore, some people fancy that they must live by rule on Sunday, but may spend other days by chance; that they must give some money in charity, but may squander and dissipate the rest as they have a mind; such people have not enough considered the nature of religion, or the true reasons of piety.

If it is our glory and happiness to have a rational

nature that is capable of imitating the divine nature, then it must be our glory and happiness to improve our reason, to act up to the excellency of our rational nature, and to imitate God in all our actions to the utmost of our power.

It is an immutable law of God, that all rational beings should act reasonably in all their actions, on all occasions; not in the use of some particular thing, but in the use of all things, and at all times. When, therefore, you are guilty of any folly, or indulge a vain temper, do not consider it as a small matter because it may seem so, if compared with some other sins, but consider that all unreasonable ways are contrary to the nature of all rational beings, whether men or angels, neither of which can be any longer agreeable to God, than whilst they act according to the reason and excellency of their nature.

These are not speculative flights, nor imaginary notions, but are plain and undeniable laws, founded in the nature of rational beings, who, as such, are obliged to live by reason, and glorify God by a continual right use of their several talents and faculties. Our blessed Saviour has plainly turned our thoughts this way, by making this petition a constant part of all our prayers, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." A plain proof that the obedience of men is to imitate the obedience of angels, not looking unto the ways of the world, but looking up unto God, and to think what wisdom and holiness is fit to prepare them for a state of glory. You must examine yourself by the Spirit of Christ; you must think how departed souls would live, if they were again to act the short part of human life; you must think what degrees of wisdom and holiness you will wish for when you are leaving the world.

Now all this is not over-straining the matter, nor proposing to yourselves any needless perfection: it is but barely complying with the Apostle's advice, when he says, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things

are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." For no one can come near the doctrine of this passage, but he who proposes to himself to do every thing in this life as a servant of God, and to make the wisdom and holiness of the Gospel the rule and measure of his desiring and using every gift of God.

CHAPTER VI.

How the imprudent use of a fortune corrupts the best principles of the mind, and fills the heart with poor and ridiculous passions through the whole course of life.

It has been already observed, that a prudent and religious care is to be used in the manner of spending our money and estate, because the manner of spending them makes so great a part of common life, and is so much the business of every day, that, according as we are wise or prudent in this respect, the whole course of our lives will be rendered either very wise or very full of folly.

Persons who are well affected to religion often wonder how it comes to pass that they make no greater progress in the religion which they so much admire. Now the reason of it is this: religion lives only in their heads, but something else has possession of their hearts; and therefore they continue, from year to year, mere admirers and praisers of piety, without ever coming up to the reality and perfection of its precepts.

If it be asked why religion does not get possession of their hearts? the reason is not because they live in gross sins or debaucheries, (for their regard for religion preserves them from such disorders,) but

because their hearts are perverted, and continually kept in a wrong state, by the indiscreet use of such things as are lawful to be used. In this number their fortunes are properly reckoned, and therefore it never enters into their heads to imagine any great danger from the enjoyment of them. They never reflect that there is a vain and imprudent use of them, which, though it does not destroy like gross sins, yet so disorders the heart, and supports in it such sensuality and dulness, such pride and vanity, as to make it incapable of receiving the life and spirit of piety.

What is more innocent than rest and retirement? and yet what more dangerous than sloth and idleness? What is more lawful and necessary than eating and drinking? and yet what is more destructive of all virtue, what is more fruitful of all vice, than sensuality and indulgence? How lawful and praiseworthy is the care of a family; and yet how certainly are many people rendered incapable of all virtue by a worldly and solicitous temper! Now it is for want of a religious exactness in the use of these innocent and lawful things, that religion cannot get possession of our hearts: and it is in the right and prudent management of ourselves, as to these things, that the art of holy living chiefly consists. Gross sins are plainly seen, and easily avoided by persons who profess religion. But the indiscreet and dangerous use of innocent and lawful things, as it does not shock and offend our conscience, so it is too apt to escape our observation.

The state of the world in these days, and the support of society as at present established, will not only permit, but even require, that some persons should allow themselves the elegancies and delights of life, by furnishing which, multitudes of poor families are subsisted with more comfort and advantage to themselves, and with greater safety to the public than they otherwise could be. But I would

earnestly recommend to every person so to regulate his domestic affairs, as to be able to set aside a certain portion of his income for charitable purposes.

If people would submit to a reasonable and regular arrangement of their fortunes, and lay aside the silly pride of endeavouring to make an appearance like those who have double their means; if people would be content to appear in their proper characters, every one would be sufficiently rich to be comfortable, and to do his duty in his allotted station.

More people are kept from a true sense and taste of religion by a *regular kind* of sensuality and indulgence, than by *gross excess*. More men live regardless of the great duties of piety through a too great concern for worldly goods, than through injustice. One man would perhaps be devout, if he was not so great a virtuoso; another is deaf to all the motives of piety, by indulging an idle, slothful temper.

All these things are only little when compared with great sins: but though they are small in that respect, yet they are great faults, as they are impediments and hindrances to a pious life. For as consideration is the only eye of the soul, as the truths of religion can be seen by nothing else; so whatever raises a levity of mind and trifling spirit renders the soul incapable of seeing, apprehending, and relishing the doctrines of piety. Would we, therefore, make a real progress in religion, we must not only abhor gross and notorious sins, but we must regulate the innocent and lawful parts of our behaviour, and put the most common and allowed actions of life under the rules of discretion and piety.

CHAPTER VII.

How the wise and pious use of a fortune carries us to great perfection in all the virtues of a Christian life.

ANY one pious regularity of any one part of our life is of great advantage, not only on its own account, but as it accustoms us to live by rule, and think of the government of ourselves. A man of business, who has brought any one part of his affairs under certain rules, is in a fair way to take care of the rest; and, in like manner, he who has brought any one part of his life under the rules of religion may thence be taught to extend the same order and regularity into other parts of his life.

If any one is so wise as to think his time too precious to be disposed of by chance; if he lays himself under the necessity of observing how every day goes through his hands, and obliges himself to a certain order of time in his business, his retirements, and his devotions, it is hardly to be imagined how soon such a conduct will reform, improve, and perfect the whole course of his life. A rule that relates to the smallest part of our life is of great benefit to us, merely as it is a rule. For, as the proverb says, he that hath begun well has half done; so he that hath begun to live by rule has gone a great way towards the perfection of his own life.

By rule must here be constantly understood a religious rule, observed upon a principle of duty to God. For if a man should oblige himself to be temperate in his meals, only in regard to his stomach; to abstain from drinking, only to avoid the headach; or be moderate in his sleep, through fear of a lethargy; he might be exact in these rules without being at all the better man for them. But when he is moderate and regular in any of these things, out of a sense of Christian sobriety and self-denial, that he may offer

unto God a more reasonable and holy life, then it is that the smallest rule of this kind is naturally the beginning of great piety.

If any one would oblige himself on the Lord's Day to abstain from many innocent and lawful things, as travelling, unnecessary visiting, &c.: if he would devote that day, besides the public worship, to greater retirement, reading, devotion, instruction, and works of charity: though it may seem a needless nicety, to require a man to abstain from such things as may be done without sin, yet whosoever would try the benefit of so little a rule, would probably find such a change made in his heart, and such piety raised in his mind, as he was an entire stranger to before. It would be easy to show, in many other instances, how little and small matters are the first steps and natural beginnings of great perfection.

But the two things, which of all others want to be under a strict rule, and which are the greatest blessings both to ourselves and to our neighbours, when they are rightly used, are our time and our money. They furnish us with continual means and opportunities of doing good: and he that is happy in the religious care and disposal of them has already advanced toward Christian perfection.

We ought to consider our fortune as the gift of God, and be anxious to make a right use of it; and for this purpose we ought daily to read the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament; to observe its precepts with a watchful attention; constantly casting an eye upon ourselves, and trying ourselves by every doctrine which it contains. We ought to be active in seizing every opportunity of doing good; to protect the innocent, to relieve the poor, and to succour the distressed, in whatever situation they are found.

Often do we hear it said, that the ingratitude and depravity of the world are now so great, that they harden people's hearts, and deter them from doing

many kind actions, which otherwise they would have performed. Alas! I fear this observation is too true. But surely, as Christians, we ought not to allow such considerations to damp our ardour in good works. A far more sublime virtue should animate our hearts, a virtue that requires not the thanks of man for its reward.

We should, moreover, on these occasions, when we are accusing our fellow-creatures of ingratitude to such frail beings as we are, carefully search into our own hearts and consciences, and ask if we ourselves are sufficiently grateful for all the innumerable blessings, which are daily and hourly showered upon us by our gracious and ever-merciful Creator. We should remember, "to cast out first the *beam* out of our own eye, that we may see clearly to pull out the *mote* that is in our brother's eye¹."

It may be said, that we often give alms to persons who do not deserve them. But what then? Is not this the very method of divine goodness? Does not God make his sun to rise upon the evil and upon the

¹ There is a species of charity, which, upon this occasion, deserves to be noticed, viz. that of giving alms to common beggars. When we consider the benevolent provision for the poor in their respective parishes, and in the metropolis; more especially the society recently established, denominated "*The Society for the Suppression of Mendicity*," there seems to be great reason on the side of those who oppose the relief of such persons, and perhaps were that laudable Institution more generally supported, and all relief, except in cases of extreme emergency, withholden from street beggars, this disgraceful practice would almost entirely cease.

But there is another species of begging, carried on to a great extent by notorious impostors, viz. letters addressed to such persons as are supposed to be most charitably disposed. It is well known that many persons (termed askers) are almost maintained in this way, to the encouragement of idleness, and to the detriment of truly deserving objects.

If such persons as are in the habit of listening to applications of this sort would qualify themselves by annual subscriptions, or by donation, to refer such letters to some of the many societies established for the express purpose of investigating cases of supposed distress, they would thereby essentially benefit the deserving poor, and check, if not wholly defeat, a system of imposition, which very generally prevails.

good? Is not this the very goodness recommended in Scripture, that, by imitating it, we may become children of our Father which is in heaven, who sendeth rain upon the just and upon the unjust? And shall I withhold a little money or food from my fellow-creature, for fear he should not be good enough to receive it of me? Do I beg of God to deal with me, not according to my merit, but according to his goodness; and shall I be so absurd, as to withhold my charity from a poor brother, because he may not deserve it? Shall I use a measure towards him, which I pray God never to use towards me?

CHAPTER VIII.

Showing how great devotion fills our lives with the greatest peace and happiness that can be enjoyed in this world.

SOME people will perhaps object, that all these rules of holy living unto God, in all that we do, are too great a restraint upon human life; and that by depriving ourselves of so many seemingly innocent pleasures, we shall render it dull, uneasy, and melancholy.

Now to this may be answered: First, that these rules will certainly procure a quite contrary end; that instead of making our lives dull and melancholy, they will render them full of content and satisfaction; that by these rules we only change the childish gratification of vain and sickly passions for the solid enjoyment and real happiness of a sound mind.

Secondly, that as there is no foundation for comfort in the enjoyments of life, but in the assurance that a wise and good God governs the world, so the more we depend upon God in every thing, the more we apply to Him in every place, the more we look up to Him in

all our actions, the more we conform to his will, the more we act according to his wisdom, and imitate his goodness, by so much the more do we heighten and increase all that is happy and comfortable in human life.

Thirdly, he that is endeavouring to subdue and root out of his mind all those passions of pride and envy, which religion opposes, is doing more to make himself happy, even in this life, than he who is contriving means to indulge them. For these passions are the causes of all the disputes and vexations of human life; they are the fevers of our minds, vexing them with false appetites, and spoiling our taste for those things which are our proper food.

Do but imagine that you have seen a man who proposed reason as the rule of all his actions, and had no desire but after such things as nature wants and religion approves; who was as pure from all the motives of envy and covetousness, as from thoughts of murder; who, in his freedom from worldly passions, had a soul full of divine love, wishing and praying that all men may have what they want of worldly things, and be partakers of eternal glory in the world to come: do but fancy a man living in this manner, and your own conscience will immediately tell you, that he is the happiest man in the world, and that it is not in the power of the richest imagination to invent any higher happiness in the present state of life. So true it is, that the more we live by rules of religion, the more peaceable and happy do we render our lives.

The strictest rules of religion are so far from rendering a life dull, anxious, and uncomfortable, as is above objected, that, on the contrary, all the miseries, vexations, and complaints that are in the world, are owing to the want of religion, being entirely caused by those absurd passions which religion teaches us to subdue. For all the wants which disturb human life, which make us uneasy to ourselves, quarrelsome with others, and unthankful to God; which weary us with vain labours, and foolish anxieties; which carry

us from project to project, from place to place, in a poor pursuit of we know not what, are the wants which neither God, nor nature, nor reason hath subjected us to, but which are solely infused into us by pride, envy, and covetousness. So far, therefore, as you reduce your desires to such things as nature and reason require : so far as you regulate all the motions of your heart by the strict rules of religion, so far you remove yourself from that infinity of wants and vexations, which torment every heart that is left to itself.

Most people indeed confess, that religion preserves us from a great many evils, and helps us in a great many respects to a more happy enjoyment of ourselves ; but then they imagine that this is only true of such a moderate share of religion as restrains us from the excesses of our passions. They maintain that the strict rules of an exalted piety are such contradictions to our nature as must needs make our lives dull and uncomfortable. Although the weakness of this objection sufficiently appears from what has been already said, yet I shall add a few more words upon it.

This objection supposes that religion, moderately practised, adds much to the happiness of life, but that such heights of piety as the perfection of religion requires, have a contrary effect. It supposes, therefore, that it is desirable to be kept from the excesses of envy, but not so to be kept from other degrees of envy. It supposes also that the happiness of life consists in a mixture of humility, charity, and envy, heavenly affection and covetousness. All which is absurd : for if humility be the peace and rest of the soul, then no one has so much happiness from humility as he that is the most humble. If excessive envy is the torment of the soul, he most perfectly delivers himself from torment who most perfectly extinguishes every spark of it. If there is any peace and joy in doing any action according to the will of God, he that brings the most of his actions to this

rule does the most of all increase the peace and joy of his life.

For example, if religion only restrains the excesses of revenge, but lets the spirit still live within you in lesser instances, your religion may make your life a little more outwardly decent, but cannot make you at all happier or easier in yourself. But if you have once sacrificed all thoughts of revenge in obedience to God, and are resolved to return good for evil at all times, that you may render yourself more like unto God, and be fitter for his mercy in the kingdom of love and glory; this is a height of virtue that will make you feel its happiness.

Moreover piety requires us to renounce no ways of life where we can act *reasonably*, and offer what we do to the glory of God. All ways of life, all gratifications and enjoyments, that are within these bounds, are fully permitted by the strictest piety. Whatever you can do and enjoy as in the presence of God, as his servants and rational creatures that have received reason and knowledge from Him, is allowed by the law of piety; and do you think your life uncomfortable unless you act contrary to that reason and wisdom which He has implanted in you? As for those gratifications, which are only invented by the folly and corruption of the world, which inflame our passions, and sink our souls into grossness and sensuality, and render us incapable of the divine favour either here or hereafter, surely it can be no uncomfortable state of life to be rescued by religion from *such*, and to be rendered capable of eternal happiness.

How ignorant, therefore, are they of the nature of religion, of the nature of man, and the nature of God, who think a life of strict piety and devotion to God to be a dull and uncomfortable state, when it is so plain and certain that there is neither comfort nor joy to be found in any thing else!

CHAPTER IX.

Concerning that part of devotion which relates to daily Prayer, and how to increase the spirit of devotion.

HAVING in the foregoing chapters shown the necessity of a devout spirit, or habit of mind, in every part of common life, I come now to consider that part of devotion which relates to prayer.

Prayer is the nearest approach to God, and the highest enjoyment of Him, that we are capable of in this life. It is the holiest exercise of the soul, and the most exalted use of our best faculties. Sleep is such a dull state of existence, that even amongst mere animals, we despise them most which are most drowsy; he, therefore, who chooses to yield himself up to a slothful and unnecessary indulgence in sleep, chooses that state which is a reproach to mere animals, rather than that exercise which is the glory of angels.

You will perhaps say, that, though you rise late, yet you are always careful of your devotions when you are up. It may be so; but what then? Is it well done of you to rise so late, because you pray when you are up? Is it pardonable to waste great part of the day in bed, because some time after you say your prayers? It is as much your duty to rise to pray as it is to pray when you are risen. And if you are late at your prayers, you offer to God the prayers of an idle, slothful worshipper, that rises to prayers as idle servants rise to their labour.

Some people will not scruple to tell you, that they indulge themselves in sleep because they have nothing else to do; and that, if they had either business or pleasure to rise for, they would not lose so much of their time in sleep. But such people must be told that they mistake the matter, that they have a great deal of business to do: they have a wayward heart to change; they have the whole spirit of religion to get.

For, surely, he that thinks religion to be of less moment than business or pleasure, and that he has nothing to do, because nothing but his prayers demand his attention, may justly be said to have the whole spirit of devotion to learn.

This is the right way of judging of the crime of wasting great part of our time in bed. You must not consider the thing barely in itself, but what it proceeds from; what virtue it shows to be wanting; what vice it naturally strengthens.

I do not take upon me to prescribe to you the use of any particular forms of prayer, but only to show the necessity of prayer at certain times, and in a certain manner. For, though I think a form of prayer very necessary and expedient for public worship, yet if any one find a better way of raising his heart unto God in private, than by prepared forms of prayer, I have nothing to object against it. Thus much I believe is certain, that the generality of Christians ought to use a form of prayer: nay, it seems right for every person to begin with such a form, and if he feels a disposition to break forth into new and higher strains, he should leave it for a while, and follow those fervours of heart, till he again wants the assistance of his usual petitions.

All people that have ever made any reflections upon what passes in their own hearts, must know that they are very changeable in regard to devotion. Sometimes we are so awakened, have such strong apprehensions of the Divine Presence, are so full of deep compunction for our sins, that we cannot confess them in any language but that of tears.

On the other hand, we are sometimes so sunk into our bodies, so dull and unaffected with that which concerns our souls, that our hearts are as much too low for our prayers. We cannot feel half of that in our hearts, which we have in our mouths; we thank and praise God with forms of words, but our hearts have little or no share in them.

It is, therefore, highly necessary to provide against this inconstancy, by having at hand such forms of prayer as may best suit us, when our hearts are in their best state, and also be most likely to raise them up when they are sunk into dulness. For, as words have a power of affecting our hearts on all occasions, and as the same things, differently expressed, have various effects upon the mind, so it is reasonable that we should make this advantage of language, and provide ourselves with such forms of expressions as are most suitable and likely to move and enliven our souls, and to fill them with proper sentiments.

The first thing that you are to do, when you are upon your knees, is to make your heart as sensible as you can of the Divine Presence. Now if this recollection, of spirit is necessary, (and who can say it is not?) then how poorly must they perform their devotions who are always in a hurry; who begin them in haste, and hardly allow themselves time to repeat their form of words with any gravity or attention! theirs is properly saying prayers, instead of praying.

The spirit of devotion, indeed, we all know, is the gift of God, and not attainable by any mere power of our own; yet it is never withheld from those who, by wise and proper means, prepare themselves for a reception of it.

And is it not then amazing to see how eagerly men employ their parts, their sagacity, time, study, application, and exercise; how all helps are called to their assistance, when any thing is intended or desired in worldly matters; and how dull, negligent, and unimproved they are; how little they use their parts, sagacity, and abilities, to raise and increase their devotion?

Devotion is nothing else but right apprehensions and right affections towards God: and as prayer is the proper means of strengthening and improving them, so we must use all our care and contrivance to give it full power. For this purpose, we must have

recourse to retirement and holy reading; we must observe regular hours of prayers; we must always employ the best forms we can procure; and we must continually adapt our devotions to the condition of our lives and the state of our hearts. They who have most leisure are more especially and more seriously called to an eminent observance of these holy rules of a devout life; and they who, through the necessity of their situation, have but little time to employ thus, must make the best use of that little.

Such are the infallible modes of making devotion produce a devout life, and such are the methods that, with the blessing of God, will secure to us a happy eternity.

CHAPTER X.

On the Subjects most proper for our Morning's Devotion.

You have seen in the foregoing chapter what means you are to use to improve and raise your devotion; I shall now take the liberty of suggesting a few additional hints, which I hope will be found useful in the discharge of so important a duty.

I would recommend praise and thanksgiving as particularly proper for our morning's devotions, not only because it is our bounden duty to return thanks for our rest and protection from all evil during the night, but because no state of mind is so holy, so excellent, and so truly perfect, as that of gratitude to God, and consequently nothing is of more importance in religion than what exercises this habit of mind. A dull uneasy complaining spirit, which is unfortunately sometimes the spirit of those who seem careful of religion, is of all tempers the most contrary to it; for it disowns that God whom it pretends to adore.

If a man does not believe that all the world is as God's family, where nothing happens by chance, but

all is guided and directed by the care and providence of a Being, who is all love and goodness to all his creatures, he cannot be said truly to believe in God. But he who believes that every thing happens to him for the best, cannot possibly complain for want of something that is better. If, therefore, you live in murmuring and discontent, accusing all the accidents of life, it is not because you are a weak and infirm creature, but it is because you want the first principle of religion, a right belief in God. For as thankfulness is an express acknowledgment of the goodness of God towards you, so repining and complaints are a plain accusation of God's want of goodness towards you.

As praise and thanksgiving were the first devout offerings made to God by the primitive Christians in the morning; so humility was considered as a disposition more especially to be desired, and most earnestly to be prayed for, at that season. It is a virtue indeed so truly necessary to the attainment of a pious life, that I should by all means advise petitions for the acquirement of it to be subjoined to the foregoing subjects of praise and thanksgiving. An humble state of mind is the very state of religion, the life and soul of piety, the foundation and support of every virtue, the best guard and security of all holy affections. Without humility there is no pretending to a reasonable, pious life; and yet, generally speaking, it is of all virtues the least understood, the least regarded, the least intended, the least desired, and the least sought after.

No people have more occasion to be afraid of the approaches of pride, than those who have made some advances in a pious life; for pride can grow as well upon our good qualities as upon our vices, and steals upon us on all occasions. It is for this reason that I so earnestly advise every devout person to begin every day in the pious exercise of humility, that he may go on in safety under its protection, and not fall a sacri-

fice to his own progress in those virtues, which are to save mankind from destruction.

Humility does not consist in having a worse opinion of ourselves than we deserve, or in abasing ourselves lower than we really are. But as all virtue is founded in truth, so humility is founded in a true and just sense of our weakness, misery, and sin. He who rightly feels and lives in this sense of his condition, lives in humility.

Let any one man look back upon his own life, and see what use he has made of his reason, how little he has consulted it, and still how much less he has followed it; what foolish passions, what vain thoughts, what needless labours, what extravagant projects have taken up the greatest part of his time; how absurd he has been in his words and conversations; how seldom he has done well with judgment, and how often he has been kept from doing ill by accident; how seldom he has been able to please himself, and how often he has been displeased with others; how often he has changed his counsels, hated what he loved, and loved what he hated; let any one but take this view of his own life, and he will see reason enough to confess that pride was not made for man. Let him consider, that if the world knew as much of him as he knows of himself, if they saw what vanity and passions govern his heart, and sully and corrupt his best actions, he would have no more pretence to be honoured for his goodness and wisdom, than a rotten, distempered body has to be loved and admired for its beauty and comeliness.

This indeed is so true, and so well known to almost all people, that nothing would appear more dreadful to them, than to have their hearts fully discovered to the eyes of all beholders. And shall pride be entertained in a heart thus conscious of its own miserable behaviour? Shall a creature in such a condition, that he could not support himself under the shame of being known to the world in his real state :

shall such a creature, because his shame is only known to God and his own conscience, dare, in the sight of the Almighty, to be vain and proud of himself?

I am acquainted with a person whose character may furnish us with a useful lesson upon this subject. He is rich, of good birth, and very fine parts. He is haughty and imperious to all his inferiors; is very full of every thing that he himself says or does; and never supposes it possible for such a judgment as his to be mistaken. He can bear no contradiction; and discovers the weakness of your understanding as soon as you oppose him.

Nothing, however, is so odious to him as a conceited, proud man; and the misfortune is, that in this he is so very quick-sighted, that he discovers in almost every body some strokes of vanity. On the other hand, he is exceeding fond of humble, modest people. "Humility," says he, "is so amiable a quality, that it commands our respect wherever we meet with it. There is no possibility of despising the meanest person that has it, or esteeming the greatest man that wants it."

It is very true, my friend, that you speak sincerely when you say that you love humility and hate pride; but, take this along with you, that you never once in your life thought of any other humility, or any other pride, than that which you have seen in other people. Your case is a common one. The fuller of pride any one is himself the more offended will he be at the smallest instance of it in other people. But the loving of humility is of no benefit or advantage to you, unless you love to see your own thoughts, words, and actions governed by it; and the hating of pride does you no good, unless you hate to harbour any degree of it in your own heart.

As he who thinks he loves God enough shows himself to be an entire stranger to himself; so he that thinks he has humility enough, shows that he is not so much as a beginner in the practice of humility.

CHAPTER XI.

Showing how difficult the practice of humility is made by the spirit of the world.

EVERY person, when he first applies himself to the exercise of the virtue of humility, must consider himself as a learner. He has not only as much to do as he who has some new art or science to learn, but has also a great deal to unlearn. He must relinquish an abundance of passions and opinions, which the fashion and spirit of the world have made natural to him; and this is one reason why Christianity is so often represented as a new birth, and a new spirit.

Now the spirit of the Gospel is chiefly the history of Christ's conquests over the spirit of the world, and the number of true Christians is only the number of those who, following the doctrines of Christ, have lived contrary to this worldly spirit. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." Again, "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world."—"Set your affection on things above, not on things on earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." This is the language of the New Testament, this is the mark of Christianity.

You will perhaps say that the world is now become Christian, at least that part of it where we live, and therefore it is not to be considered as in the state of opposition to the Gospel, in which it is acknowledged to have been when it was Heathen. I can readily admit that the world now professes Christianity; but will any one say that this Christian world is of the spirit of Christ? Are the passions of sensuality, self-love, pride, covetousness, and vain-glory, less contrary to the spirit of the Gospel amongst Christians than they were amongst Heathens? or can you say that the passions and propensities of the Heathen world are distinguished?

How many consciences are kept quiet upon no other foundation, than that they do as others do, and sin under the authority of the Christian world! How many of the directions of the Gospel lie unregarded, and how unconcernedly do people read them, for no other reason but because they are disregarded by the Christian world! How many compliances do people make to the Christian world without any hesitation or remorse, which if they had been required by the Heathens, would have been refused as contrary to the holiness of Christianity! Who could be content to see how opposite his life is to the Gospel, but because he sees that he lives as the Christian world does?

Blind error! fatal delusion! Who that reads the Gospel attentively would want to be persuaded of the necessity of self-denial, humility, and poverty of spirit, but that the authority of the world has banished the doctrines of the cross?

There is nothing, therefore, that a good Christian should be more suspicious of, or more constantly guard against, than the authority of the Christian world: certainly the change which the world hath undergone has only altered its methods, but not lessened its power, of destroying religion. Christians had nothing to fear from the Heathen world but the loss of their lives; but the world, become a friend, makes it difficult for them to save their religion. For only ask yourself: is the piety, humility, and sobriety of the Christian world, the piety, humility, and sobriety of the Christian spirit? If not, how can a man acquire this temper, without renouncing the spirit and temper of the world in which he lives?

These reflections will, I hope, with the blessing of God, help you to break through those difficulties and resist those temptations, which the authority and fashion of the world have raised against the practice of true Christianity.

CHAPTER XII.

On resignation to the Divine pleasure, and the nature and duty of conforming to the will of God in all our actions.

I HAVE recommended certain subjects to be made the constant matter of our devotions in the early part of the day, such as thanksgiving, praise, humility. There is still, however, another subject, which I could wish you to add to those already mentioned, and which is not less important than any of them; I mean, resignation and conformity to the will of God.

There is nothing wise, holy, or just, but the will of God. It is conformity to his will that gives virtue and perfection to the highest services of angels in heaven; and it is submission to the same will that makes the ordinary actions of men on earth become an acceptable service unto God. All creatures are created to perform his will. The sun and moon obey it by the necessity of their nature, and angels conform to it by the perfection of their nature. If, therefore, you would show yourself not to be a rebel and apostate from the order of the creation, you must act like beings above and below you. It must be the great delight of your soul, that God's will may be done by you on earth, as it is in heaven. For this you make a petition in your daily prayers, and for the accomplishment of this you ought to strive to the utmost of your power.

Now resignation to the Divine will signifies a cheerful approbation, and thankful acceptance, of every thing that comes from God. It is not enough patiently to submit, but we must thankfully receive and fully approve of every thing, that by the order of God's providence happens to us. There is, indeed, no reason why we should be patient under the dispensations of Providence, but what is as good and strong a reason why we should be thankful.

If we were under the hands of a wise and good physician, who could not mistake our case, or do any thing for us but what certainly tended to our benefit, it would not be enough to be patient, and abstain from murmurings at such a physician; it would be as great a breach of duty and gratitude to him, not to be pleased and thankful for what he did, as it would be to murmur against him. Now this is our true state with relation to God: we cannot be said so much as to believe in Him, unless we believe Him to be a God of infinite wisdom and goodness, and that He willeth and ordereth all things for the best. Whenever therefore you find yourselves disposed to uneasiness or murmurings at any thing which is the effect of God's providence, you must look upon yourself as denying either the wisdom or goodness of God; for every complaint necessarily supposes this.

Every man is by the law of his creation, by the first article of his creed, obliged to consent to and acknowledge the wisdom and goodness of God, in his general providence over the whole world. He is to believe that it is the effect of God's great wisdom and goodness that the world itself was formed at such a particular time, and in such a manner. He is to believe that God's providence over states, kingdoms, times, and seasons, is all for the best; that persecutions, wars, famines, and plagues, are all permitted by God and providence to the general good of man in this state of trial.

A good man is to believe all this with the same fullness of assent that he believes God to be in every place, though he neither sees nor can comprehend the manner of his presence. This is a noble magnificence of thought, a true religious greatness of mind, to be thus affected with God's general providence: admiring and magnifying his wisdom in all things; never murmuring at the course of the world or the state of things, but looking upon all around, at heaven and earth, as a pleased spectator; and adoring that in-

visible hand which gives laws to all motions, and overrules all events, to ends suitable to the highest wisdom and goodness.

It is very common for people to allow themselves great liberty in finding fault with such things as have only God for their cause. Every one thinks he may justly say, what a wretched, abominable climate he lives in. This man is frequently telling you what a dismally cold day it is, and what intolerable seasons we have. Another thinks he has very little to thank God for, and that it is hardly worth his while to live in a world so full of changes and revolutions.

But this querulous temper is highly blameable; nor has religion yet obtained a seat in the heart of him who is possessed of it. It sounds indeed much better to murmur at the course of the world, or the state of things, than to murmur at providence; to complain of the seasons and weather, than to complain of God: but if these have no other cause but God and his providence, it is a poor distinction to say that you are only angry at the things, but not at the cause and director of them.

But to proceed: resignation and thanksgiving to God are only acts of piety when they are acts of faith, trust, and confidence in the Divine goodness. The faith of Abraham was an act of true piety, because it stopped at no difficulty, was not altered or lessened by any human appearances. It first of all carried him, against all show of happiness, from his own kindred and country, into a strange land, not knowing whither he went. It was this same faith against so many pleas of nature, so many appearances of reason, that prevailed upon him to offer up Isaac, accounting that God was able to raise him up from the dead.

Now this faith is the true pattern of Christian resignation, which requires no more to the support of it, than such a plain assurance of the goodness of God, as Abraham had of his veracity. And if you ask yourself what greater reason Abraham had to

depend upon the Divine veracity, than you have to depend upon the Divine goodness, you will find that none can be given. You cannot, therefore, look upon this as an unnecessarily high pitch of perfection, since the want of it implies the want, not of any high notion, but of a plain and ordinary faith in the most certain doctrines both of natural and revealed religion.

Thus much concerning resignation to the Divine will, as it signifies a thankful approbation of God's general providence. It is now to be considered as it signifies a thankful acceptance of God's particular providence over us.

Every man is to look upon himself as a particular object of God's providence, and as much under his care and protection, as if the world had been made for him alone. It is not by chance that any man is born at such a time, of such parents, and in such a place and condition; it is certain that every soul comes into the body at such a time and in such circumstances, by the express designment of God.

The Scriptures assure us that it was by Divine appointment that our blessed Saviour was born at Bethlehem, and at such a time. Now though it was owing to the dignity of his person, and the great importance of his birth, that thus much of the Divine counsel was declared to the world concerning the time and manner of it; yet we are as sure, from the same Scriptures, that the time and manner of every man's coming into the world is according to some eternal purposes and directions of Divine providence, and in such time, and place, and circumstances, as are directed and governed by God for particular ends of his wisdom and goodness. This we are as certain of from plain revelation as we can be of any thing. For if we are told that not a "sparrow falleth to the ground without our heavenly Father," can any thing more strongly teach us, that much greater beings, such as human souls, come not into the world without the care and direction of God? If it is said that the very hairs of

our head are numbered; is it not to teach us that not even the smallest thing imaginable can happen to us, by chance?

How noble an idea does this give us of the Divine Omnipotence presiding over the whole world, and governing such a long chain and combination of seeming accidents and chances, to the common and particular advantages of all beings! so that every person, in such a wonderful variety of causes, contingencies, and events, should fall into such a particular state as was foreseen and fore-ordained to his best advantage, and so as to be most serviceable to the wise and glorious ends of God's government of all the world.

After seeing things in such a point of view, how is it possible to be ungrateful, and murmur at the best of Beings, and perhaps at the very thing that is to prove the cause of our salvation? Had you it in your power to get that which you think it so grievous to want, it might possibly be that very thing which of all others would most endanger your future happiness. So that whether we consider the infinite goodness of God, that cannot choose amiss for us, or our own great ignorance of what is most advantageous to us, there can be nothing so reasonable or pious, as to have no will but the will of God, and desire nothing for ourselves, in our persons, our state and condition, but that which the good providence of God appoints us.

Now you must not reserve the exercise of this pious temper to any particular times and occasions, or fancy how resigned you will be to God, if such or such trials should happen. For this is amusing and deceiving yourself with the notion or idea of resignation, instead of the virtue itself. Do not, therefore, please yourself with thinking how piously you would act, and submit to God in a plague, a famine, or a persecution, but be intent upon the perfection of the present day, and be assured that the best way

of showing a true zeal, is to make little things the occasions of great piety.

Begin then in the smallest matters, and on the most ordinary occasions, and accustom your mind to the daily exercise of this pious temper in the lowest occurrences of life. Continually raise your mind to God in proper acts of resignation; then you may justly hope, that you shall be numbered amongst those who are resigned and thankful to God in the greatest trials and afflictions.

CHAPTER XIII.

On Evening Prayer, and on the nature and necessity of Examination.

I AM now coming to the subject of Evening Prayer, the propriety of which, I hope, will be allowed by every person who professes a regard for piety.

It is indispensably necessary, that at some one hour of the evening every true Christian should call himself to account, and review his behaviour from the beginning of the day.

The necessity of this examination is founded on the necessity of repentance: for, "if we *confess* our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" which is as much as to say, that then only our sins are forgiven, when they are thus *confessed* and *repented* of. There seems, therefore, the greatest necessity that our daily actions should be constantly observed and brought to account, lest by a negligence we load ourselves with the guilt of unrepented sins. Hence the examination of ourselves every evening is to be considered as a commendable rule, and fit for a wise man to observe, because this daily repentance is of very little signification, and.

loses all its chief benefits, unless it be a particular confession and repentance of the sins of that day.

Perhaps you have hitherto only been accustomed to confess yourself a sinner in general terms, and ask forgiveness in the gross, without any particular remembrance of, or contrition for, the individual sins of that day; and by this practice you are brought to believe, that the same short general form of confession is a sufficient repentance for every day. Now I am persuaded that the principal reason of our faults being so seldom amended, is because they are not distinctly specified, and constantly brought in review before us.

But in order to make this examination beneficial, every man should oblige himself to a certain method in it. As every man has something peculiar in his nature, stronger inclinations to some vices than others, some infirmities that stick close to him, and are harder to be conquered than others; and as it is as easy for a man to know this of himself, as to know whom he likes and dislikes, so it is highly necessary, that these particularities of our natures and tempers should never escape a severe trial at our evening repentance. I say a severe trial, because nothing but a rigorous severity against these natural tempers is sufficient to conquer them. They are the right eyes that are not to be spared, but to be plucked out, and cast from us. For as they are the infirmities of nature, so they have the strength of nature, and must be treated with great opposition, or they will be too strong for us.

He, therefore, who knows himself most of all subject to anger, and easily ruffled by trifles, must be very exact and constant in his examination of this temper every evening. He must search out every slip that he hath made of that kind, whether in thought, word, or action; he must reprove and himself before God for every thing that he did and done in obedience to this passion. He

must no more allow himself to forget the examination of this temper than to forget his prayers.

Further : As all states and employments of life have particular dangers and temptations, and expose people more to some sins than others, so every man who wishes his own improvement, should make it a necessary part of his evening's examination, to consider how he has avoided or fallen into such sins as are most common to his state of life. For as our business or condition in life has great power over us, so nothing but such watchfulness as this can secure us from those temptations to which it daily exposes us. The poor man, from his situation in life, is always in danger of repining and uneasiness ; the rich man is most exposed to sensuality and indulgence ; the tradesman to exacting unreasonable profits ; the scholar to pride and vanity ; so that in every state of life a man should always have a strict eye upon faults to which he is particularly liable.

I would moreover exhort you, at the hour of examination and confession, to reflect seriously on the guilt of sin, which has done so much mischief to our nature, and exposed it to such great punishment, and made it so odious to God, that nothing less than the sufferings and death of the Son of God, and repentance on our part, can restore us to the Divine favour. Consider next your own particular share in the guilt of sin. And if you would know with what zeal you ought to repent yourself, consider how you would exhort another sinner to repentance ; and what repentance and amendment you would expect from him, whom you judged to be the greatest sinner in the world.

Now this case every man may justly reckon to be his own : you may fairly look upon yourself to be the greatest sinner you know in the world. First, because you are better acquainted with the folly of your own heart than with that of other people, and can charge yourself with various sins which you only

know of yourself, and cannot be sure that other sinners are guilty of them. Secondly, because the greatness of our guilt arises chiefly from the greatness of God's goodness towards us; from the particular graces and blessings, the favours, the lights and instructions, that we have received from him; and as these circumstances are only known to ourselves, so we alone can judge of the heinousness of our sin. This is the reason why the greatest saints in all ages condemned themselves as the greatest sinners; because they knew some aggravations of their own sins, which they could not know of other people's.

The right way therefore to fill your heart with true contrition, and a deep sense of your own unworthiness, is this: you are not to consider or compare the outward form or course of your life with that of other people, and then think yourself less sinful than they, because the outward course of your life is less sinful than theirs; but in order to know your own guilt, you must consider your own particular circumstances, your health, your sickness, your youth or age, your particular calling, the excellence of your education, the degrees of light and instruction you have received, the good men you have conversed with, the admonitions you have had, the good books you have read, the numberless multitude of divine blessings, graces, and favours that you have received, the motions of grace that you have resisted, the resolutions of amendment that you have broken, and the checks of conscience that you have disregarded. A careful and frequent examination of ourselves in these respects will tend to humble us in our own eyes; make us very apprehensive of our own guilt; and very tender of censuring and condemning other people, when, for aught we can tell, the severity of God may be more due to us than to

Having confessed and asked pardon for your sins,

you must still look upon yourself as obliged to repeat some prayer before you go to bed. The subject which is most proper at that time will be Death. Let your petitions be for right sentiments of the approach and importance of it; and beg of God that your mind may be possessed with such a sense of its nearness, that you may make every day a preparation for it. Represent to your imagination that your bed is your grave; that you are to have no more to do with this world, and that it will be owing to God's great mercy if you are suffered to behold another morning. Finally, commit yourself to sleep as into the hands of God, as one that is to awake amongst spirits that are separated from the body, and are waiting for the judgment of the last day.

However such thoughts as the foregoing may be ridiculed by the young, the gay, and thoughtless, yet I hope that many into whose hands this book may chance to fall, will suffer no evening to escape without a solemn performance of the exercises here recommended.

CHAPTER XIV.

The conclusion. Of the excellency and greatness of a devout spirit.

I HAVE now only to add a word or two in recommendation of a life governed by this spirit of devotion; for though it is as reasonable to suppose it the desire of all Christians to arrive at Christian perfection, as to suppose that all sick men desire to be restored to perfect health; yet experience shows us that nothing wants more to be pressed, repeated, and forced upon men's minds, than the plainest rules of Christianity.

Nay, in this polite age of ours, we have so lived away the spirit of devotion, that many seem afraid to be even suspected of it, imagining that great devotion

is founded in ignorance and poorness of spirit; and that little, weak, and dejected minds are generally the greatest proficient in it. I wish, therefore, to show that great devotion is the noblest disposition of the greatest and noblest souls, and that they who think it receives any advantage from ignorance and poorness of spirit, are themselves not a little, but entirely unacquainted with the nature of devotion, the nature of God, and the nature of themselves.

And first: Who reckons it a sign of a poor, little mind, for a man to be full of reverence and duty to his parents, to have the truest love and honour for his friend, or to excel in the highest instances of gratitude to his benefactor? Are not these affections the most eminent in the most exalted and perfect minds? And yet what is the highest devotion, but the highest exercise of these affections of duty, reverence, love, honour, and gratitude, to the most amiable, glorious Parent, Friend, and Benefactor of all mankind? So long, therefore, as duty to parents, love to friends, and gratitude to benefactors, are considered as honourable to human nature, so long must devotion, which is nothing else but duty, love, and gratitude to God, have the highest place amongst the highest virtues.

Further: That part of devotion which expresses itself in sorrowful confessions, and penitential tears of a broken and contrite heart, is very far from being any sign of a little and ignorant mind. Who does not acknowledge it an instance of a liberal, ingenuous and brave mind, to confess a fault, and ask pardon for any offence? Are not the finest and most improved minds the most remarkable for this excellent temper? Is it not also allowed, that the nobleness and excellence of a man's spirit is much shown, when his sorrow and indignation at himself arise in proportion to the folly of his crime, and the goodness and greatness of the person he has offended? But if these things are so, then the greater any man's

mind is, the more he knows of God and himself, the more will he be disposed to prostrate himself before God in all the humblest acts and expressions of repentance.

Devotion, therefore, is so far from being best suited to little ignorant minds, that a true elevation of soul, a lively sense of honour, and great knowledge of God and ourselves, are the greatest natural helps that our devotion can have.

Now, on the other hand, it shall be made to appear that indevotion is founded in the most excessive ignorance.

For how comes it that most people have recourse to devotion when they are in sickness, distress, or fear of death? Is it not because this state shows them more clearly their want of God, and their own weakness? Is it not because their infirmities, their approaching end, convince them of something which they did not perceive before? Now, if devotion at these seasons is the effect of a better knowledge of God and ourselves, then the neglect of devotion at other times is owing to great ignorance of God and ourselves.

Further: As indevotion is ignorance, so it is the most shameful ignorance. This will fully appear to any one who considers by what rules we are to judge of the excellency of any knowledge, or the shameful-ness of any ignorance. Knowledge itself would be no excellence, nor ignorance any reproach to us, but that we are rational creatures. But if this be true, then it follows plainly, that that knowledge which is most suitable to our rational nature, and which it most concerns us to know, is our highest and best knowledge: and that ignorance which relates to things that are most essential to us, and which we are most concerned to know, is, of all others, the most gross and shameful ignorance.

If, therefore, our relation to God be our greatest concern; if our advancement in his favour be our

highest advancement, he that hath the highest notions of the excellency of this relation ; he that most strongly perceives the high worth and great value of holiness and virtue ; that judges every thing little, when compared with it, proves himself to be master of the best and most excellent knowledge.

For if there is an infinitely wise and good Creator, in whom we live, move, and have our being, whose providence governs all things, in all places, surely it must be the highest act of our understanding to conceive rightly of him ; it must be the noblest instance of judgment, the utmost perfection of our nature, to worship and adore this universal providence, to conform to its laws, to study its wisdom, and to live and act every where as in the presence of this infinitely good and wise Creator.

I have subjoined these few reflections, for the sake of those people who consider great devotion as bigotry and poorness of spirit, and I hope they now will be convinced of the folly and absurdity of such an opinion. I hope they will be fully satisfied that all worldly attainments, whether of greatness, wisdom, or bravery, are, comparatively, but empty sounds ; and that nothing is truly wise, or great, or noble, in human spirit, but rightly to know and heartily to worship and adore the Great God, who is the support and life of all spirits, whether in heaven or on earth.

THE END.

THE
POOR MAN'S PRESERVATIVE
AGAINST THE
ERRORS OF ROMANISM:

ADDRESSED TO THE
LOWER CLASSES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND
IRELAND.

BY THE
REV. JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE,
FORMERLY CHAPLAIN TO THE KING OF SPAIN, IN THE ROYAL CHAPEL OF
SEVILLE: NOW A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.



NEW EDITION,
CORRECTED, AND CONSIDERABLY ALTERED BY THE AUTHOR.

LONDON:
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THE
AUTHOR'S ADDRESS
TO THE READER
IN 1834.

FIVE or six years have passed without my looking into this little work of mine; and I am glad of this, because, having allowed my mind entirely to cool upon the subject, I find that I can pass judgment upon the work as impartially as if it had been written by another person. The occasion of this revision has been presented by a request of Messrs. Milliken and Son, of Dublin, that I would allow them to print and publish an edition of the present work. I have not only granted that request, but, wishing to increase the usefulness of the *Poor Man's Preservative* to the best of my knowledge and the utmost of my power, I have taken the trouble of correcting and altering every part in which I thought I discovered some fault. The alterations which I have made are considerable. But, as in matters of fact I always have had strict accuracy for my guide, my *statements* remain exactly the same as they have appeared in the preceding editions.

Nor will it be found that I have changed my *opinions*; though, had that been the case, I should not feel the least shame to confess it. The opinions (I repeat) which I brought from Spain in regard to the *tendencies* of the Roman Catholic doctrines, remain the same.

But my practical knowledge of the modifications which *tendencies* arising from *religious opinions*, are apt to receive from external circumstances, has greatly increased. I now perceive that the profession of the most *liberal religious doctrines* is **not** a complete security against religious persecution, though it must contribute gradually to make way for *real toleration*—the *toleration* which proceeds from Christian *love* and *humility*; not the grudging toleration which proceeds from *selfishness*, or, at the best, from the fear of an *intolerance* more powerful, and more narrow, than our own. In like manner, I am now persuaded, that the most *intolerant* principles may lose a great part of their bitterness, when *circumstances*, rather than the will of man, prevent, for a long time, their practical application, and make them recoil, to a certain extent, on those who profess them.

I have still something to add about *myself*. Such is, indeed, the natural right of those who find themselves unjustly abused and calumniated. Though at an immense distance from the apostle Paul, I have thought it my duty, as that great man did, in regard to himself, to support my character of *conscientious disinterestedness* by every possible sacrifice of temporal advantages. And I thank God that I may say with Paul, “As the truth is in Christ, no man shall stop me of this boasting.” Not only has not the circumstance of my having been a clergyman of the Church of England, for many years, procured me any pecuniary advantage, but it is also well known to many of my friends, (whom I chose for witnesses) that when, eight years ago, my works on Romanism brought me into high repute with many who were able to advance

me in the world, I took a solemn resolution never to accept any kind of church preferment.

In regard to this work, the circulation of which has been very extensive, I feel it a duty to the cause which it supports, to state, that I have given leave to print and distribute it, to every one who has asked for that permission. As, before the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge had accepted my offer of a right to reprint the "Poor Man's Preservative" as often as they wished, four editions had been sold by Messrs. Rivington, of London, and the balance due to me amounted to *one hundred pounds*, I ordered *fifty pounds* to be given to the same Society, and the other *fifty pounds* to the Society for *Building and Repairing Churches*. I have, besides, paid for whatever copies I have taken for distribution.

Finally, I entreat the Roman Catholics, who may venture to read this book, to believe that, in spite of the great evils which the intolerance of their church (as it exists in my native country) has inflicted upon me, I acknowledge as brethren all who, under any *denomination whatever*, "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity¹."

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

Dublin, February 21, 1834.

¹ Eph. vi. 24.

TO THE READER.

MY FRIEND,

WHOEVER you may be who happen to take up this book, if you belong to that numerous and respectable class who cannot afford to employ a great part of their time in reading, and have not the means of buying expensive books—it is for *you* that I have written the one which you now hold in your hands.

Who I am, I will tell you presently; for I mean, by your favour, to hold a pretty long conversation with you; but let me speak first about this little book. I wrote, a few months ago, a work on the Roman Catholic religion, which, as I hear from the booksellers, has had a good sale among the rich. I might, indeed, rest satisfied with this success, if, even at the time when I was working hard with my pen, a whisper within had not said to me—"Are you sure that the prospect of gain or praise is not the real cause of all this labour?"—"I am well aware," said I, "that *the heart is deceitful above all things*¹, and that, conscious as I feel of the purity of my motives, yet something may be wrong in them. I will, however, with God's blessing, if this book should be well received, write another for the poor. I will give it away to be printed for them at the cheapest rate, and will make no profit at all by it. I will take care, besides, that it contain, in a small compass, more than my work for the higher classes; and it shall be written in a manner that will

¹ Jeremiah xvii. 9.

require no learning to be well understood." My book, as I have told you already, was published, and the great people were pleased to say that I had proved my point. Then letters came to me from some very worthy gentlemen, urging me to print a cheaper edition of my work, that it might be within the power of the poor to buy it. I was thankful, indeed, for this advice: but my mind had been previously made up to go beyond it. It cheered me up, however, and I immediately set about composing this little work on purpose for *you*.

But when I took up the pen, I had to consider in what manner I could best afford you both instruction and entertainment. After casting many schemes in my mind, it appeared to me, that by imagining myself sitting by your side, and entering into a conversation upon the subject which I propose to treat, I should make the reading of this book less tiresome, than if I wrote in the usual way, and had all the talk to myself, in set chapters. I mean, therefore, to give you a share in the composition of the work itself: and though it is impossible for me to guess exactly what you would say if we were conversing together, I hope that the questions and remarks which I shall put in your mouth, will be such as you would not be sorry to have used, and not very unlike those which your own mind would suggest.

Let us then, if you please, begin our first conversation, or *Dialogue*; in which you will bear the name of *Reader*, and myself that of *Author*: and may God bless the result to both of us!

Chelsea, July, 1825.

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DIALOGUE I.

Containing an Account of the Author; how the Errors of the Roman Catholic Church made him an Infidel; and how, to avoid her Tyranny, he came to England, where he returned to Christianity.

Reader. WELL, Sir, since you are pleased to wish for a conversation with me, may I make bold to ask who you are?

Author. By all means, my good friend. The truth is, that, unless you know who I am, and by what strange and unforeseen events I happen to be here, our conversation would be to little purpose. You must, then, know, in the first place, that I am a Spaniard, and have been regularly bred and ordained a Catholic Priest.

R. Indeed, Sir! Perhaps you are one of those poor creatures, who, I hear, have been driven out of Spain, for having tried to give it a better government?

A. No, my friend: I have been now (1825) more than fifteen years in England, and came hither of my own accord, though I left behind every thing that was most dear to me, besides very good preferment in the Church, and the prospect of rising to higher places of honour and emolument.

R. Why, Sir! that appears strange.

A. So it must to those who are not acquainted with the evil from which I resolved to escape, at the cost of every thing I possessed in the world. You, my dear friend, have had your lot cast in a better country. Were it possible for you to have been born in Spain, and yet to possess the free spirit of a *Briton*, you would not wonder at the determination which made me quit parents, kindred, friends, wealth, and country, and cast myself upon the world at large, at the

age of five and thirty, trusting to my own exertions for a maintenance. All this I did merely to escape from *religious tyranny*.

R. You quite surprise me, Sir! But I wish you would tell me what it is you mean by that *religious tyranny*, which you seem to have feared and hated so strongly.

A. You will easily understand it as I proceed with the story of my own life. I was born of gentle parents, and brought up with great care and tenderness. My father's family were Irish, and the English language being spoken by him and many of his dependents, I learned it when a boy; and thanks to that circumstance, which I consider as a means employed by Providence for my future good, I can now thus freely converse with you. Both my father and mother were Roman Catholics, extremely pious from their youth, and devoted to works of charity and piety during the whole course of their lives. It was natural that such good parents should educate their children in the most religious manner; and they spared themselves no pains to make me a good Roman Catholic. My disposition was not wayward; and I grew up strongly attached to the religion which was instilled into my mind. I had scarcely arrived at my fourteenth year, when, believing that the life in which I could most please God was that of a clergyman, I asked my parents to prepare me for the church; which they agreed to with great joy. I passed many years at the university, took my degrees, and, at the age of five and twenty, was made a priest. It is the custom in Spain, when certain places become vacant in cathedrals, and other great churches, to invite as many clergymen as will allow themselves to be examined, before the public, to stand candidates for the vacancy. After the trial of their learning, the judges appointed by law choose the person whom they believe to be most competent. I should be ashamed to boast, but it so happened, that, soon after my becoming a priest, I was made one of the chaplains of the king of Spain, in the

way I have just told you. All had been, hitherto, well enough with me ; and I thank God that the ease and good fortune which had always attended me, did not make me forget my duties as a clergyman. Doubts, however, had before occurred to me as to whether the Roman Catholic religion was true. My fear of doing wrong by listening to them made me hush them for a long time ; but now all my peace of mind was gone. In vain did I kneel and pray : the doubts would multiply upon me, disturbing all my devotions. Thus I struggled month after month, till, unable to answer the objections that continually occurred to me, I renounced the Roman Catholic religion in my heart.

R. In your *heart*, Sir ! I hope you do not mean that when you had settled with yourself that the Roman Catholic religion was false, you pretended still to be a Roman Catholic.

A. What would you think of a power or authority, that would force you to act against your religious opinions, and to profess publicly as true what you were convinced to be false ?

R. I should say that such a government taught people to be deceivers.

A. Well ; now you will be able to understand what I mean by *religious tyranny*. The popes of Rome believe that they have a right to oblige all men who have been baptized, but more especially those who have been baptized by their priests, to continue (outwardly at least) Roman Catholics to their lives' end. Whenever any one living under their authority has ventured to deny any of the doctrines which the church of Rome believes, they have shut him up in prison, tormented him upon the rack, and, if he would not recant, and unsay what he had given out as his real persuasion, the poor wretch has been burnt alive. The kings of Spain, being Roman Catholics, acted upon these matters according to the will of the pope ; and, in order to prevent every Spaniard from being any thing, at least in appearance, but a Ro-

manist, had established a court called the *Inquisition*, where a certain number of priests tried, in secret, such people as were accused of having denied any of the articles of the Roman Catholic faith. Whenever, moved by fear of the consequences, the prisoner chose to eat his own words, and declare that he was wrong, the priests sent him to do penance for a certain time, or laid a heavy fine upon him : but, if the accused had courage to persist in his own opinion, then the priests declared that he was a heretic, and gave him up to the public executioner, to be burnt alive.

R. You quite astonish me. Have you ever seen such doings, Sir?

A. I well remember the last person who was burnt for being a heretic, in my own town, which is called *Seville*. It was a poor blind woman. I was then about eight years old, and saw the pile of wood, laid upon barrels of pitch and tar, where she was reduced to ashes.

R. But are there many who venture their lives for the sake of what they believe to be the true Gospel?

A. Alas! there was a time when many hundreds of men and women sacrificed themselves for the love of a reformed system of Christianity, which they believed to be the original gospel religion. But the horrible cruelties practised upon them, disheartened all those who were disposed to throw off the yoke of the pope; and now people disguise their religious opinions, in order to avoid the most dangerous persecution.

R. And you, Sir, of course, were obliged to disguise your own persuasion, in order not to lose your liberty and your life?

A. Just so. I lived ten years in the most wretched and distressed state of mind. Nothing was wanting to my worldly happiness, but the liberty of declaring my opinions: but that is impossible for a Roman Catholic, who lives under the laws which the popes have induced most of the Roman Catholic princes to

establish in their kingdoms. I could not say, as a Roman Catholic may, under the government of Great Britain and Ireland, "I will no longer be a spiritual subject of the pope: I will worship God as my conscience directs me, and according to what I find in the Bible." No: had I said so, or even much less; had any words escaped me, in conversation, from which it might be suspected that I did not believe exactly what the pope commands, I should have been taken out of my bed in the middle of the night, and been carried to one of the prisons of the Inquisition. Often, indeed, very often have I passed a restless night under the apprehension that, in consequence of some unguarded words, my house would be assailed by the ministers of the Inquisition, and I should be hurried away in the black carriage which they used for conveying dissenters to their dungeons. Happy indeed are the people of these kingdoms, where every man's house is his castle: and where, provided he has not committed some real crime, he may sleep under the protection of a mere latch to his door, as if he dwelt in a walled and moated fortress! No such feeling of safety can be enjoyed where the tyranny of Rome prevails. A Roman Catholic, *who is not protected by protestant laws*, or by laws influenced by a powerful protestant interest, as in some parts of Germany and in France, is all over the world a slave, who cannot utter a word against the opinions of his church, but at his peril. "The very walls have ears," is a common saying in my country. A man is indeed beset with spies; for the church of Rome has contrived to employ every one as such, against his nearest and dearest relations. Every year there is publicly read at church a proclamation, or (as they call it) a *bull* from the pope, commanding parents to accuse their children, children their parents, husbands their wives, and wives their husbands, of any words or actions against the Roman Catholic religion. People are told, that whoever disobeys this command, not

only incurs damnation for his own soul, but is the cause of the same to those whom he wishes to spare. So that many have had for their accusers their fathers and mothers, without knowing to whom they owed their sufferings under the Inquisitors; for the name of the informer is kept a most profound secret, and the accused is tried without ever seeing the witnesses against him.

R. I am perfectly astonished at the things you say, Sir; and did I not perceive by your manners that you are a gentleman, I should certainly suspect that you were trying to trepan us poor unlearned people.

A. I neither wonder, nor am offended at your suspicion. All I can say to remove it is, that I am well known in London; that for the truth of every thing you have already heard, and will hear from me, I am ready to be examined *upon oath*; and that there are many hundreds of Spaniards at this moment in England, who will attest every word of mine about the Inquisition of the pope in Spain. I say the Inquisition of the pope, because that horrible *court of justice* was established, kept up, and managed, by and under the pope's authority. And now I must add one word as to the effects of the pope's contrivance to make spies of the nearest relations. I have told you that my parents were good and kind. My mother was a lady whom all the poor of the neighbourhood loved for her goodness and charity; and indeed I often saw her denying herself even the common comforts of life, that she might have the more to give away. I was her favourite child, being the eldest; and it is impossible for a mother to love with more ardent affection than that she shewed to me. Well, as I could not entirely conceal my own mind in regard to religion, she began to suspect that I was not a true Roman Catholic in my heart. Now, she knew that the pope had made it her duty to turn informer even against her own child, in such cases; and dreading that the day might come, when some words should drop from

me against the Roman Catholic religion, which it would be her duty to carry to the judges, she used to avoid my company, and shut herself up, to weep for me. I could not, at first, make out why my dear mother shunned my company; and was cut to the heart by her apparent unkindness. I might to this day have believed that I had lost her affection, but that an intimate friend of her's put me in possession of the state of her mind.

R. Upon my word, Sir, you give me such horror of Roman Catholics, that I shall in future look with suspicion on some neighbours of mine of that persuasion.

A. God forbid that such should be the consequence of my communication with you. The Roman Catholic religion in itself, and such as the pope would make it all over the world, if there were no protestants to resist it, is the most horrible system of tyranny, that ever opposed the welfare of man. But most of the Roman Catholics in these kingdoms are free from many of the evils which their religion produces in other countries. They have grown up under the influence of a constitution, which owes the fulness of its freedom to protestantism; and many of them are protestants in feeling. Thanks to the Reformation, even the spiritual subjects of the pope and his church have learnt to respect themselves, and to set bounds to an authority which many of them acknowledge only for the purpose of preventing divisions among the lower classes. Could the pope obtain any real influence in the government of these kingdoms, I would not answer for the consequences. But a legal system of religious oppression cannot find any powerful supporters in these countries. Poor, ignorant individuals may still continue in blind subjection to priests. But the complete ignorance, without which mental slavery cannot exist, must soon disappear from these islands.

R. Heaven send that happy day! But, Sir, I want to know the rest of your own story, and how, though obliged to appear outwardly a Roman Catholic, you settled within yourself what you were to believe.

A. I will not delay to satisfy your curiosity, though that part of my story is the most painful to me. At all events, you will be sure, when you hear it, that I am telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, since I do not spare myself.—You must know then, that, from the moment I believed that the Roman Catholic religion was false, I had no religion at all, and lived without God in the world.

R. I am sorry to hear that, Sir. But surely you might have tried some other church before you became an infidel.

A. Ah, my honest and worthy friend, your expressions deserve my praise, though I feel humbled and rebuked by their truth. Yet you forget that I was in a country where the Roman Catholic religion played its accustomed game of *Christ with the pope, or no Christ*. The first thing that a strict Roman Catholic teaches those who grow under his care, is, that either all that the Church of Rome believes, is true, or Christianity must be a human invention. To believe that the Church of Rome can be, or is wrong in one single article of her creed, is, according to that church, the same as to disbelieve the whole gospel. That is the reason why, in the countries where the Roman Catholic religion is strictly professed, every one who rejects it in his heart, looks immediately upon Christianity as a fable.

R. Pardon me, Sir, I do not mean to offend you: but I should wish to know if you still continue of the same opinion, and believe with the infidels, whose books are sometimes secretly sold among country folks, that there is no truth in the Bible?

A. I am so far from being of that mind, that I do humbly and earnestly pray to God he will rather deprive me of every temporal comfort, and make my sufferings in this world equal to those of the most unhappy wretch that ever breathed, than withdraw from me his grace, whereby I believe in his Son Jesus Christ, and hope, through his merits, for eternal salvation.

R. I have not the heart to say *Amen* to the first part of your prayer, though I cordially join in the last. But will you have the goodness to inform me how it was that you came to believe again in the Bible, in spite of your former opinions? For I have often heard a neighbour of mine, who frequently boasts that he is an infidel, say, that the man whose eyes are once (as he calls it) open about the Bible, can never be made again to believe in it.

A. I wish I could relate my own history to that neighbour of yours. Perhaps, by God's mercy, he might himself use some of the means which Providence has employed in my own conversion. Of one thing I feel quite assured on this point, that if by God's grace, which always assists the honest inquirer after religious truth, your infidel neighbour would abstain from deliberate sin, and pray daily to his Maker (for I hope he has not gone so far as to deny the being of a God) to lead him into the truth, he would soon become a sincere Christian. But I will proceed with the account of myself. When I had in my own mind thrown off all allegiance to the Christian religion, though I tried to enjoy myself, and indulge my desires, I could find neither happiness nor comfort. My mind was naturally averse to deceit, and I could not brook the necessity of acting publicly as the minister of a religion which I believed to be false.—But what could I do? As for wealth and honours, heaven knows they did not weigh a straw against my love of manly openness and liberty. I once, indeed, went so far as to write to a friend who lived at Cadiz, and whom, after many years' absence, I have lately seen in London, to procure me a passage to North America, whither I wished to escape; trusting to my own labour for subsistence. But when I looked round, and saw my dear father and mother in the decline of life; when I considered that my flight would bring their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave, tears would gush into my eyes, and

the courage which I owed to anger melted at once into love for the authors of my being. Ten years of my life did I pass in this hot and cold fever, this ague of the heart, without a hope, without a drop of that cordial which cheers the very soul of those who sacrifice their desires to their duty, under the blessed influence of religion. At last it pleased God to afford me a means of escaping from the tyranny of the pope, and make me willingly and joyfully submit to the easy yoke of his blessed Son Jesus Christ. The ways of Providence for my change appear so wonderful to me, that I feel almost overcome when I earnestly think upon them. In the first place, it was certain that I could not leave Spain for a protestant country, without giving a death-blow to my parents. Could any human being have foreseen, in the year 1807, that in 1810, my own father and mother would approve my leaving Spain for England? And yet, so it came to pass. You have heard how Bonaparte entered Spain with the design of placing his brother Joseph upon the throne of that country; how for a time he seemed to have obtained his wishes, when his armies advanced till they came within view of Cadiz, and threatened to extinguish the last hope of the Spaniards. I was at that time at Seville, my native town. As the French troops approached it, all those who would not submit to their government, and had the means of removing to another place, tried to be beforehand with them, by taking their flight to Cadiz. My parents could not abandon their home; but as they abhorred the French troops, and hated the injustice of their invasion, they were anxious that I should quit the town. Here I saw the most favourable opening for executing my long delayed plan for escaping the religious tyranny under which I groaned. As the security of Cadiz was much doubted, my parents approved the intention of not stopping there, but sailing as soon as possible for England. They hoped I would return. But my resolution was taken, and I well knew that I should never see those

dear objects again. I knew it was for ever; and my heart bleeds at the recollection of the last view I took of my father and mother. A few weeks after, I found myself on these shores.

R. Indeed, Sir, I think you did right. Poor as I am, had I known your case when you arrived, I would have welcomed you to my cottage.

A. If I should tell you all the gratitude I feel for this country, and my sense of the kindness and friendship which I have met with from the moment I landed, you might suspect me of flattery. But how different appeared England to me from what I had imagined it to be!

R. What, Sir, did you fear that we should behave rudely to a foreigner who came for shelter among us?

A. No, indeed; that was not my mistake. I found England as hospitable and generous as it had always been described to me. But one thing I found in it which I never expected; that was true and sincere religion. I have told you that in Roman Catholic countries people are made to believe that whoever is not a Roman Catholic is only a Christian in name. I therefore supposed that in this England, though men appeared externally to have a religion, few or none would care any thing about it. Now observe the merciful dispensations of Providence with regard to me. Had I upon my first arrival fallen in with some of your infidels, I should have been confirmed in all my errors. But it pleased God so to direct events as to make me very soon acquainted with one of the most excellent and religious families in London. I had, in my former blindness and ignorance, believed that since in Spain, which is the most thoroughly Roman Catholic country in the world, the morals in general are very loose; a nation of Christians only in name, (for such was my mistaken opinion of you,) would be infinitely more addicted to vicious courses. But, when I began to look about me, and observed the modesty of the ladies, the quiet and orderly lives

of the greatest part of the gentry, and compared their decent conversation with the profane talk which is tolerated in my country, I perceived, at once, that my head was full of absurd notions, and prepared myself to root out from it whatever I should find to be wrong. In this state of mind I went one Sunday to church, out of mere curiosity; for my thoughts were at that time very far from God and his worship. The unmeaning ceremonies of the Roman Catholics had made me sick of churches and church service. But when, in the course of the prayers, I perceived the beautiful simplicity, and the warm-heartiness, if I may say so, of your prayer-book, my heart, which for ten years had appeared quite dead to all religious feelings, could not but show a disposition to revive, like the leafless trees when breathed upon by the first soft breezes of spring. God had prevented its becoming a dead trunk: it gave indeed no signs of life; but the sap was stirring up from the root. This was easily perceived in the effect which the singing of a hymn had upon me that morning. It begins—

“ When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.”

The sentiments expressed in this beautiful hymn penetrated my soul like the first rain which falls upon a thirsty land. My long impious disregard of God, the Father and supporter of my life and being, made me blush, and feel ashamed of myself; and a strong sense of the irrational ungratefulness in which I had so long lived forced tears from my eyes. I left the church a very different man from what I was when I entered it; but still very far from being a true believer in Christ. Yet, from that day I began to put up a very short prayer every morning, asking for light and protection from my Creator, and thanking him for his goodness. It happened about that time that some books concerning the truth of religion fell in my way.

I thought it fair to examine the matter again, though I imagined that no man could ever answer the arguments against it, which had become quite familiar to my mind. As I grew less and less prejudiced against the truth of divine revelation, I prayed more earnestly for assistance in the important examination in which I was engaged. I then began a careful perusal of the Scriptures, and it pleased God, at the end of two years, to remove my blindness, so far as to enable me with humble sincerity to receive the sacrament according to the manner of the Church of England, which appeared to me, in the course of my inquiries, to be, of all human establishments, the most suited, in her discipline, to promote the ends of the Gospel, and in her doctrines as pure and orthodox as those which were founded by the Apostles themselves. It is to me a matter of great comfort that I have now lived a much longer period in the acknowledgment of the truth of Christianity, than I spent in my former unbelief.

R. You have indeed great reason to thank God. But have you never had any doubts about our Church, since you became a member of it?

A. Never, my friend, as compared with the Roman Catholic. As to the Church of England, I am not acquainted with any Christian establishment to which I would give the preference over it. And as respects the Roman Catholic system, I never for a moment had a doubt, that, compared even with the most imperfect Protestant system, every unprejudiced man ought to reject it. My mind has never had the least doubt, in favour of the church I quitted. I will, however, confess to you, that a few years after I became a Protestant, I was strongly tempted in my faith; not, however, as I said before, from any leaning to Romanism, but from a doubt whether the doctrine of the people called *Unitarians*—I mean those who say that Christ was nothing but a man, the son of Joseph and Mary—might not be true. During the examination of this point, though I was not very long in finding that the

assertion that Christ was only a highly inspired man, is not scriptural, my old habits of unbelief were roused, and they harassed me severely. Clouds of doubt hovered, a long time, over my soul, and darkness increased now and then to such a degree, that I feared my Christian faith had been extinguished. Had I, in consequence of this disposition to unbelief, either ceased to pray, or returned, as is often the case, to a course of immorality, nothing, I believe, could have saved me. But the grace of God was secretly at work in me; and, whatever doubts I had about the doctrines of the gospel, I never deemed myself at liberty openly and wilfully to offend against its commandments. I sincerely wished to find the truth; and, distressed as I often was by the difficulties and obscurities which Christian men have read, by their attempts to explain the mysteries of our redemption, yet my knowledge of the vanity and flimsiness of infidelity made me often turn to Christ, and say, (I can assure you I often uttered the words aloud in tears,) "To whom shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life!" Partly from these doubts, and partly from a long and lingering illness which the change of climate had brought upon me, I passed the greater part of a year without receiving the sacrament. Had I, as far as it was my own fault, abstained much longer from that appointed means of grace, my spiritual danger would have increased; but, by God's mercy, I examined myself upon that point, and finding that my conscience did not charge me with any true impediment to the reception of the holy sacrament; and that, as to the doubts on my mind, they were involuntary, and accompanied with a sincere desire of finding the truth, I presented myself at the sacramental table, with feelings similar to those which I conceived I should have, if, as it was then probable, death had sent me, with my doubts, before the judgment-seat of Christ.

¹ John vi. 68.

I threw myself, in fact, wholly upon his mercy. My trust did not prove deceitful; for calm was soon restored to my soul; and I found myself stronger than ever in the faith and profession which I made when I became a member of the Church of England. You see, my friend, that I disguise not my weakness from the world. You may suppose, that, for a man who has spent his whole life in the pursuit of learning, it must be very mortifying to confess so many errors, so many doubts, in a word, to show the utter feebleness of his mind and soul, when unsupported by Divine grace. But I conceive this to be a duty which I owe to the truth of the gospel, and to the spiritual welfare of my fellow-creatures. How happy should he if the humble individual, when tempted, should take courage from the knowledge of his errors, and cling to prayer whilst he examined, like the Bereans, "whether these things were so!"

M. S. I pity what you have suffered; but I must say, it comforts me to find that doubts and errors upon religious subjects are not confined to the unlearned.

A. They are not, indeed; on the contrary, the pride of human knowledge is often the rock on which the faith of the higher classes of society is wrecked. You must not suppose, however, that true knowledge of any kind is opposed to Christianity. But there is a pride of learning which indisposes the heart for that constant feeling of dependence on God, that incessant desire of Divine support against error and sin, without which we must not expect to succeed in any religious inquiry. There are unquestionable advantages in learning, when it is joined with a humble, a meek spirit. But the poorer classes of society, if it be not their own fault, are in no way farther removed from salvation, on account of their want of learning, than the more privileged of mankind. "To the poor was

the gospel preached," first of all, and through the poor and uneducated was the world converted to Christ; for, after all, both rich and poor, the learned and the unlearned, must equally, by humility and an intimate knowledge of their own sinfulness, approach the source of salvation in Christ. Happy indeed are those millions of humble Christians, who, from the publication of Christianity, have embraced, by a lively faith, the offer of pardon and salvation in which the *true gospel* consists, and proved by their conduct that their faith was *true*! How infinitely more happy has been the lot of these humble Christians, than mine! After spending my whole life in reading; after trying, by ten years incessant study, to obtain a complete assurance that Christianity was a fable, and finding out at last, by great attention and labour, that such books as engaged to prove this had deceived me; I have to thank God that by his grace, I find myself, as to Christian faith, upon a level with the humblest and most illiterate disciple of Christ, who trusts in his redeeming blood for salvation.—Yet the ways of God are wonderful; and it is not presumptuous to hope that the bitter struggles of my mind may be made the means of confirming the faith of many.

R. I feel assured they will. Without flattering you, Sir, or supposing that your talents or knowledge are above the common run of gentlemen of your class, it stands to reason, that the religion which, after being so many years an unbeliever, you have embraced so earnestly, must have a very strong evidence in support of its truth.

A. So strong, my friend, does that evidence appear to me, that I would say, whoever takes proper pains to examine it, if he really acknowledges that there is a living God, a Being who concerns himself in the moral conduct of mankind, will never be completely at rest, till he has believed in Christ. The greatest part of those who pretend to believe in a God, and yet reject the gospel where it is taught, without the vari-

ous kinds of human errors which disfigure its genuine doctrines, do not mean by the name of the Deity any thing like the Supreme Being, the living God, the intelligent Creator of mankind, revealed in the Scriptures; but some unknown cause of what we call nature, to which the good or bad conduct of men is equally indifferent. If it were not so, it would be difficult for them to suppose that a religion like the Christian, supported by proofs so superior to those of all the other religions in the world, so infinitely above them all in the purity of its moral views, and so effectual in allaying the storms of evil passions, and bestowing peace and happiness on the breast that fairly gives it room to act; it is impossible, I say, that a man who really believes in an all-seeing, and all-wise God, could at the same time believe that a religion of this kind is only one of the numerous impostures which have been, at different times, successfully practised on mankind; and that it is indifferent in the eyes of a holy and just God, whether men, who can make the comparison, receive or reject it. This consideration was, my dear friend, my sheet anchor, in the fierce tempest of doubt, which, for a time, threatened to sink my faith after my conversion to protestant Christianity. When nearly overcome by a multitude of minute infidel arguments (for they are all like a swarm of puny insects, and can never form a well-connected band, as the proofs of Christianity do), I turned, in the anguish of my soul, to seek for a resting-place upon the "Rock of ages," Christ the Saviour. The view around me was dismal indeed; a dark gulf, with small spots, every one of which I had tried, and found unable to support me, and from which the fall, I well knew, would inevitably plunge me into the bottomless abyss of *Atheism*. It was in this distress of mind that I exclaimed with the apostle Peter, *To whom shall I go?* and remained faithful to him whom I had chosen for my Lord and Master.

R. Your reasons appear to me very strong, and

such, that no man who feels a real concern for his soul, can shut his eyes to them. I clearly understand that a living God—a God to whom the man who murders, and he who feeds the hungry, the man who oppresses, and he that protects the orphan and the widow; the man who promotes virtue in his house and neighbourhood, and he who spreads vice and misery for the gratification of his brutal passions, are not equally acceptable, or indifferent; cannot be supposed to have allowed a religious cheat to appear so beautiful and desirable, as true Christianity shews itself to every honest and upright heart. But what have you, Sir, to say to the existence of so many false religions as there are in the world? Would God permit them to exist, to the spiritual ruin of millions of men, if these matters were of real consequence in his eyes?

A. Suppose yourself obliged to penetrate through a dark forest, full of wild beasts and precipices, and crossed by innumerable paths. On the side by which your entrance lies, there stands the son of the king of the country, who with the greatest kindness offers to a great multitude of the new comers a little map, with a clear view of the paths, which, he tells them, must lead to certain ruin; while others are distinctly marked, which if they carefully follow, he promises to meet them at the other side of the perilous wood, and make them rich and happy in his kingdom. You inform yourself, by every possible means, of the character of this man, and find no reason to doubt that he is able and willing to fulfil his engagements. Yet, upon observing great crowds of men and women, who are allowed to enter with little or no advice respecting their way, you rather perty begin to question the prince about them. He will not, however, condescend to answer these questions, but urges you to avail yourself of his advice, and to consider how unjust and unfeeling it is, when he takes such pains for *your* safety, to question his justice and benevolence in his conduct towards his apparently less favoured subjects. Suppose,

lastly, that your pride and conceit get the better of your reason, and that you address the prince in such words as these: "Sir, though I have no reason to suspect your veracity, yet your conduct towards these people whom I see wandering without maps, about the forest, is not at all to my fancy. You must, therefore, either explain to me every plan and reason of your government, or I will throw away this map, and trust my own endeavours to find my way through the forest." Would you deserve compassion, if this proud rashness carried you to inevitable perdition?

R. Certainly not: God forbid I should ever act in such an ungrateful manner.

A. Yet this is exactly what men do, who object to the Gospel, that God has not made it equally known to all the nations of the world. They, in fact, cast away the "pearl of great price," because they have been chosen amongst millions to possess it. They see the real and substantial value of the gift: they cannot but believe that he who puts it into their hands must be infinitely kind and merciful; but still their pride makes them prefer total darkness to the partial light which is offered them; they think it too much to give glory to God for what they themselves receive, and trust that his goodness will, in some way, provide for his other creatures, and finally judge the world in righteousness.

R. I only proposed the question, because I have heard it from others. But, as to myself, I feel satisfied that every man's duty is to receive God's gifts with thankfulness, and without questioning the wisdom and justice of his government. I will, however, before we part, take the liberty to ask you why, when you became convinced of the truth of the Gospel, you did not return to your parents and friends in Spain? Surely there cannot be such difference between Romanism and Protestantism, as to force a man to become a stranger for ever to his own flesh and blood, and (as I believe you have done) turn his back upon

all hopes and prospects of life, and trust to chance for his subsistence. But perhaps, Sir, you have availed yourself of the liberty to marry, which clergymen have in this country, and cannot leave your wife and children.

A. You are mistaken, my friend, in your conjecture. I lost my health soon after my arrival in this country, and have never possessed the means of supporting a wife, in such comfort as might make her amends for devoting her life to the care of a sickly husband. But I do not like to speak upon these subjects, more than is absolutely necessary to remove all suspicion as to the motives of my change. My voluntary exile has been attended to me with every thing that can make me thankful, yet without any circumstance that could bribe my will against my sincerity. As to the principal part of your question, I can assure you that the difference which I find between Christianity as it is represented by the church of Rome, and as a person free from the authority of that church, (that is, *a protestant*;) may find it in the New Testament, is so great and important, that, had there been no protestantism in the world, I cannot conceive how I should be a Christian at this moment.

R. Do you believe then, Sir, that the Roman Catholics are not Christians?

A. I have known most sincere followers of Christ amongst them; but am perfectly convinced that Roman Catholicism, BY ADDING OTHER FOUNDATIONS to the only one *which is laid*, that is, *Jesus Christ*¹; by making the Pope, with his church, if not the *author*, certainly the *finisher* of their faith—the object on which their minds habitually and ultimately rest, exposes the members of that communion to the most imminent danger from the arguments of infidelity. What happened to me in my youth is the lot of a great part of the clergy and the higher classes of Spain.

¹ 1 Cor. iii. 11.

The lower classes, and those who among the higher read little, and for that little confine themselves to the books approved by their church, are fierce bigots, who would, if they had it in their power, spread desolation and havoc among the nations who do not bend the knee before the saints and relics of Rome. But, amongst such as read and think for themselves, I seldom found a sincere Christian. By the intolerance which Romanism exercises, wherever it is the religion of the country, multitudes are forced to be hypocrites; but they are generally so uneasy and restless under the restraint imposed on them by the threats of the law, that a very slight acquaintance with another unbeliever will be sufficient to open their hearts to each other, and make them attack, in private, with great violence or levity, the most sacred mysteries of religion. There are few practical observations of my own, which I look upon with more confidence, than the direct tendency of the Roman Catholic religion to produce infidelity. I suppose you either recollect, or have heard, the almost universal contempt in which the Christian religion was held in France about the time of the Revolution. Now, had the French people been sincere Christians, as they appeared, just before their revolution broke out, they could not possibly have been changed in a few months into such horrible infidels, as that there should have been a doubt in their sort of parliament, whether they were or not to pass a law against the belief in a God. Here, therefore, you may observe the common effects of Romanism, where it is forced upon a whole nation by law. It first disfigures and distorts the Gospel, so as to make it appear absurd and ridiculous in the eyes of men that are bold enough to use their judgments. Then it stops their mouths, and makes their thoughts rankle in their hearts, till, at last, when some great commotion releases them from the fear of religious tyranny, they abhor the very name of religion, under which they have been forced to bow to the most bare-

faced impostures and vexations; and shake off, in desperate impiety, their allegiance to God; taking it to be one and the same thing with the yoke so long and heavily laid on their necks by the pope and his supporters.

R. You think then, Sir, that a Protestant is safer from the attacks of infidelity than a Roman Catholic?

A. Incomparably safer. In matters of religion, I do not much like illustrations or comparisons taken from subjects which may lead the mind to levity. But I cannot help comparing the question between a Romanist and an infidel to one of the bets which you call *neck or nothing*. As a Roman Catholic is bound to believe that the scriptures would be useless without the infallibility of the pope and his Church, he must be ready to cast away the whole Bible, as soon as he shall be obliged to confess that there is the least error in the creed of his church. The Romanist grounds his belief of the Bible on his belief in the Church of Rome; the Protestant, on the contrary, grounds his respect for the Church to which he belongs, on his belief of the Bible. The whole building of religion has been placed upside down by the Romanist, and the original foundations been made to stand upon the spires and pinnacles of the superstructure. Knock one of these down, and the whole tumbles to the ground. It is not so with the Protestant. He also has a Church; but if it be a truly Protestant Church, she will leave him free to try her authority by her conformity with the scriptures. She will not, like Rome, teach her children that nothing can be true Christianity but what is professed under her control, and that Christ will not acknowledge as his disciples such as learn his doctrines through any other channel. A true Protestant Church, rather than endanger the saving faith of her members, by rivetting upon their minds the notion of no alternative between the absolute rejection of Christ, and perfect submission to her own declaration, will sacrifice every view of advantage to herself, and even

afford matter of exultation to her opponents, by leaving her members in perfect freedom to desert her, and choose their own Christian guides. "Thanks be to God! (exclaims a pious and amiable bishop¹ of the Church of England and Ireland, in one of the most eloquent passages to be read in any language,) thanks be to God, this mark of our Saviour is in us. As Solomon found the true mother by her natural affection, that chose rather to yield to her adversary's plea, claiming her child², than endure that it should be cut in pieces; so may it soon be found, at this day, whether is the true mother: our's that saith, Give her the living child, and kill him not; or your's, (the Church of Rome) that if she may not have it, is content it may be killed, rather than want of her will. 'Alas! (saith our's, even of those that leave her,) these be my children! I have borne them to Christ in baptism: I have nourished them as I could with my own breasts, his Testaments. I would have brought them up to man's estate, as their free birth and parentage deserves. Whether it be their lightness, or discontent, or her enticing words and gay shows³, they leave me; they have found a better mother. Let them live yet, though in bondage. I shall have patience; I permit the care of them to their Father. I beseech him to keep them, that they do no evil. If they make their peace with him, I am satisfied; they have not hurt me at all.' Nay, but saith your's, (the Church of Rome,) 'I sit alone as Queen and mistress of Christ's family; he that hath

¹ Bishop Bedell. He was promoted in 1624 to the see of Kilmore, in Ireland. The spirit of retaliation, which the previous persecutions of Rome still kept alive, found the greatest opponent in Bishop Bedell. His meekness and universal charity had so gained him the hearts of the Irish Roman Catholics, that in the rebellion of 1641, the Bishop's palace was the only dwelling in the county of Cavan which the fury of the rebels respected. The passage above quoted is from a letter to a person who had turned papist. I have copied it from THE FRIEND, a work of Mr. S. T. Coleridge, which is much less known than its eloquence, piety, and learning, deserve.

² Read the third chapter of the first book of Kings.

³ The splendid Church-service of Rome.

not me for his mother cannot have God for his Father. Mine therefore are these, either born or adopted; and if they will not be mine, they shall be none.' So, without expecting Christ's sentence, she cuts with the temporal sword, hangs, burns, draws, those that she perceives inclined to leave her, or have left her already. So she kills with the spiritual sword those that submit not to her; yea, thousands of souls, that not only have no means so to do, but many which never so much as have heard whether there be a pope of Rome or no. Let our Solomon be judge between them—yea, judge you—more seriously and maturely, not by guesses, but by the very mark of Christ, which wanting yourselves, you have unawares discovered in us; judge, I say, without passion and partiality, according to Christ's word, which is his flock, which is his Church."—Oh, my friend, if the deluded Protestants, who allow themselves to be allured to Romanism, knew, as I do, by a long and sad experience, the proud, fierce, and tyrannous spirit of the Church to which they submit, by their recognition of the Pope and his laws, they would weep, with more bitter tears than Esau, the loss of that Christian liberty, which is the birth-right of every one who is born a Protestant. A true Roman Catholic is the spiritual slave of the slaves of the Pope, the priesthood, all over the world. If you hear them talk loud and boldly in these kingdoms; if they appear to you as free and independent as other men, they owe it to the Protestant laws, which protect them against the Church tyranny to which their religion binds them. They owe it also to the politic system pursued by the Pope himself, who, by allowing to them, in silence, this apparent freedom, acts like the huntsmen in India, who let their tame elephants roam at large in the forests, that they may entice the yet untamed and free into the pitfalls. Would you form a correct idea of the character and spirit of that Church which the Roman Catholics bind themselves to obey, as they hope for salvation; of that

Church, to be free from whose grasp, I deem my losses clear gain, and my exile a glorious new birth to the full privileges of a man and a Christian—grant me another patient hearing, at your own convenience, and you shall see the Pope's Church, such as she is, and without the disguises which she sometimes uses in order to enlarge her power.

R. I will hear you again, whenever you are disposed to speak on so important a subject.

DIALOGUE II.

Origin and Principles of Protestantism; Calumnies of the Romanists against Luther; Origin and Progress of the Spiritual Tyranny of the Pope; Existence of true Protestants long before Luther; Persecution of the Vaudois and Albigenses; Right Notion about the Church of which we speak in the Creed.

Reader. I CANNOT tell you, Sir, how anxious I have been for your return.

Author. It cannot be more, my good friend, than I myself have been to come to you. But as I know that I must be either a welcome or an unpleasant visitor, according as people dwell upon or reject the words of my first conversation; I feel some misgivings within me when I approach them the second time. Now, I can tell you with a certainty, which I do not derive from any confidence in myself, but from my experience of the nature of truth, that, since you have given some thought to the subject of our first conversation, you will, by God's blessing, bear with me to the end of our conferences.

R. That I will, Sir; for I love truth in all matters; and much more so, of course, in those which concern my salvation. Now, I must tell you, my head has been at work upon things that I had never thought of before. When I formerly met my Roman Catholic neighbours, or saw their chapel, these things appeared

to me as natural as the large yew-tree in our church-yard, or the holly-hedge before the rector's house. There they are; and I never troubled myself to know how they came there. But I now say to myself, I am a Protestant; and farther such a one is a Roman Catholic. The reason of this I know to be, that my father, and my father's father, and so on, were Protestants, and his were Catholics. But was this always so? How did this great division begin among Christians? I have, of course, heard of the *Reformation*, and of Luther, who, according to a little penny book, which is frequently hawked among the country folks, seems not to have been a good man; for, it is said, he himself declares that the devil taught him what he was to write against the Roman Catholics. I can hardly believe this to be true: I wish, Sir, you would set me right about the Protestant religion, and who it is that we Protestants follow: Is it Luther?

A. I must beg you to stop and consider the true meaning of the expression—*protestant religion*. People talk of the *protestant religion* as if it were a complete creed containing every thing that Protestants believe. But you well know that there is no such general agreement of doctrine among Protestants. Now, from want of attention to this fact, many Protestants are perplexed and entangled, when the Romanists object to them a want of *unity* of doctrine. Observe, however, that Protestantism is not a *particular religion*. Protestantism consists in the rejection of the authority which the pope and his Church claim over all Christians, in matters of faith. On *this* point all Protestants are agreed—whoever rejects that authority, and still continues a follower of Christ's doctrine, as, to the best of his knowledge, he finds it in the scriptures, is a Protestant. The Roman Catholics would fain persuade the world that Luther is the author of our religion; but it is to be hoped that their partiality deceives them, and that they do not use a deliberate untruth out of pure spite. Such as are really learned

among them, cannot but know that Protestants acknowledge no master, on religious points, but Christ, whose instructions they seek in the inspired writings of his apostles and evangelists, contained in the New Testament. It is, however, a great shame that some learned men among the Roman Catholics should employ themselves in writing and sending about such trash as *the confessed intimacy of Luther with Satan*, when they must know, in the first place, that the story is a downright misrepresentation; and that, if Luther had really been the worst of men, (which is the very reverse of the truth), it would be the same, with regard to us Protestants, as if a thief had, by some strange chance, put an honest individual in the way of recovering a great fortune, which a cunning set of men had converted to their own profit. I wish you, my friend, to remember the comparison I have just given you, whenever the Roman Catholics, or those writers of no religion, whom they employ to seduce the unlearned, come to you with stories about the wickedness of the Reformers, and the vices of Henry the Eighth. Surely it is nothing to us by what instruments and what means God was pleased to deliver us from the impostures and tyranny of the Church of Rome,—of that Church, which, having seized our rightful inheritance, the Bible, doled it out in bits and scraps to the people, mixed up and adulterated with human inventions. It is for them to be ashamed of the men they reckon among their popes; poisoners, adulterers, and much worse still; a fact which they will not venture to deny. It is for them, I say, to be ashamed, that they believe and declare that such men held the place and authority of Christ upon earth; and that all Roman Catholics are bound still to believe their declarations, as if they had been given by Christ himself and his apostles. We Protestants do not receive revealed truth through such channels. We feel grateful, indeed, to the Protestant Reformers, all of whom at the risk, and many by the loss of their lives,

roused the attention of the Christian world to the monstrous abuses which the popes had introduced into the Church. Our Reformers encouraged the world to shake off the iron yoke, which, in the name of Christ, the popes had laid upon it; but did not claim any authority over the Protestant Churches, similar to that which Rome had usurped. The great and essential difference between the Romanists and ourselves is this: the Roman Church says to all Christians "Follow me, in the first place, and through me, the scripture:" a truly Protestant Church, on the contrary, will say, "Follow me as long as I follow the Bible. I am ready to assist you with my instruction; I will teach you that, which, by the joint learning, labour, and traditional instruction of former Christians, I profess as the true doctrine preached by Christ and his Apostles; but, after all, each of you must finally judge whether he is to agree with me, or seek other instructors." This is the true *protestant principle*. The true Protestant acknowledges no *infallible authority* between himself and the scripture; the Roman Catholic does.

R. But is there any foundation for the story which the Roman Catholics are so busy to spread among the poor people, that Luther used to converse with the Devil?

A. No other foundation, my friend, than the spite which has rankled in the hearts of many among the Roman Catholic clergy, since Martin Luther opened the eyes of men to the spiritual tyranny of their church. Luther was called by the Romanists, an instrument of the devil, and all his words were said to be put into his mouth by the Prince of Darkness. In this manner they tried to frighten the simple and ignorant; that they might stop their ears to the powerful arguments of the great Reformer. Well, then, said Luther, addressing himself to his calumniators, let the doctors of the Roman Catholic church see if they can answer the reasons by which the devil proved to me that the mass is an idolatrous and unscriptural man-

ner of worship : and he overwhelms the said doctors with unanswerable reasons drawn from the holy scriptures. What better method could he employ to refute them, than the showing that what the Romanists attributed to the devil, was the true and genuine declaration of the word of God ? I have carefully examined the works of Luther upon this point, and can assure you, that what the Roman Catholics circulate in their penny tracts is a most ungrounded calumny. It is true that, according to a style of writing more in fashion at that time than in ours, Luther describes the supposed conversation with the devil. But he does this just as people write an instructive fairy tale. They make their picture as lively as possible; well knowing that no reader will be absurd enough to take it for a real fact. They hope, on the contrary, that the moral or instruction which the story contains will be easily separated from the fable, and that, by the assistance of the curiosity which the fable keeps up, the reasoning will be more deeply impressed on the mind. In retaliation for the silly story about the devil and Luther, we might indeed write a history of many popes of Rome, which would prove, not that they were in communication with, but actually possessed by Satan. I will, however, mention to you one of them, a Spaniard by birth, whom the Roman Catholics acknowledge as the head of their church, and whom they declare to have been the representative of Christ upon earth. The pope I speak of, whose name was Alexander VI., had four sons by a concubine, with whom he lived many years. The crimes he committed in order to enrich his children, exceed those of the most wicked heathen emperors. After a life of the most diabolical profligacy, he died by poison, which he took by mistake, having prepared it for some person who stood in the way of his son's advancement. This happened only twelve years before Luther's appeal to the scriptures against a church which recognised the spiritual authority of men like

pope Alexander, and called them the vicars of Christ upon earth. From this fact alone you may judge on which side the devil was most likely to be.

R. But, Sir, have the Roman Catholics really had such monsters for their popes?

A. They have, indeed, and not a few.

R. And do they bind themselves to acknowledge the spiritual authority of such men?

A. I will explain to you the whole church-system of the Romanists in a few words. The pope is their spiritual king; and what they call their church, that is, their bishops all over the world, is, one may say, their spiritual parliament. Now, as this parliament of bishops from all parts of the world cannot meet without great difficulty, and as no one but the pope can call it together, it is the pope alone, who, in reality, holds supreme authority over his spiritual subjects, the Roman Catholics. The way in which the pope governs his churches all over the world is this: he publishes a kind of proclamation, which they call a bull, and sends it round to all places where there are Roman Catholics. As every bishop, by himself, is a subject of the pope, who calls himself the *bishop of bishops*, the bull must be obeyed by them. Every bishop commands all his priests to see that the orders of the pope be obeyed by all those who are under their charge. The priests preach the necessity of complying with the orders of the pope; and when people come to get absolution of their sins, by privately confessing them, they are told that they cannot be forgiven, unless they obey the bull from Rome. So, you see, that if all the world were true Roman Catholics, the pope would do what he pleased everywhere. Such, in fact, was the case for many centuries before the Reformation. The popes, in those times, boldly declared that they had authority from God to depose kings from their thrones; and many a fierce war has raged in consequence of the ambition of the popes, who wished all Christian kings to recognise their au-

thority. King John of England was obliged by the pope to lay his crown at the feet of a priest who was sent to represent him. That king was moreover made to sign a public deed, by which he surrendered the kingdoms of England and Ireland to the pope, reserving to himself the government of these realms under the control of the bishops of Rome; and finally, as a mark of subjection, bound himself to pay an annual tribute. The priest who represented the pope took away the crown, and kept it five days from the king, to show that it was in the pope's power to give it back or not, as he pleased.

R. But did not you say, Sir, that the pope only claims authority in spiritual matters, that is, in things that concern the soul?

A. Yes; but as the soul is in the body, the pope has often begun his spiritual government by things which are corporal and temporal. The pope used to argue in this manner: "I am the vicar and representative of Christ upon earth, and the souls of all men are in my charge. There is a king in such a kingdom, (say England) who will not believe the doctrines which I teach. He naturally will spread his own religious views in that country; and consequently it is my *spiritual* duty to take the crown off his head. His subjects (supposing them true and staunch Roman Catholics) are obliged, as they wish to save their souls, to obey my spiritual commands. I will, therefore, send a bull, or proclamation, desiring them not to acknowledge for their king, a man, who, how well soever he may govern their temporal interests, is sure to ruin their spiritual concerns, and lead them all to eternal perdition."

R. But is it a doctrine of the pope, that all men who are not of his opinion must be lost to eternity?

A. It is, indeed. It is an express article of their creed, which it is not in their power to deny without being accursed by their own church, and ceasing to be Roman Catholics.

R. I cannot comprehend how Christians all over the world came to believe that men could not be saved unless they pinned their faith on the pope and his church. I believe, Sir, no one doubted that point before the Reformation.

A. So the Roman Catholics give it out; but it is not so in fact. You must know that there exists a very ancient and numerous church, which is called the *Greek*, which never acknowledged the pope as the head of the universal church. There are also the churches of the Armenians and Ethiopians, which were established by the apostles, or their early successors, and have no idea of the necessity of submission to the pope, in order to be true Christians. Christianity, indeed, had been long established before the popes bethought themselves of claiming spiritual dominion over all Christendom. But I will tell you how they accomplished their usurpation, and you will see that the progress of their tyranny was perfectly natural. If you read the Acts of the Apostles, where we have the inspired history of the first Christian churches, you will find no mention of any authority like that which Rome claims for herself and her head, the pope. Rome, however, was then, and had been for a long time, the mistress of the world. It was now the imperial city, where the supreme authority resided which the most civilized nations obeyed. At first, the Roman emperors made the fiercest opposition to Christianity; and the Christian bishops of Rome being persecuted and in danger of their lives, had neither spirit nor leisure to imagine themselves superior to all other bishops. But the persecutions ceased; and the emperors themselves becoming Christians, the bishops of Rome began to think themselves entitled to be that in the church of Christ, all over the world, which the emperors were in the whole Roman state. It was then that it began to be given out as an unquestionable point, that St. Peter was the head of the apostles, though it never appears in the New

Testament that he claimed or exercised authority over them ; that, in like manner, the pope was the head of all bishops ; and that as Christ said to St. Peter, that he was a rock, on which he would build his church, every pope, good, bad, or indifferent, must also be a rock, on which the whole of Christianity should stand. The temporal power of Rome gave a certain colour to these absurd fancies ; for Rome was at that time, to the greatest and best part of the world, what London is now to England and all her possessions. People, you know, attach ideas of superiority to every thing that comes from the capital of a great empire. It happened, however, that about the time when the popes began to think of these imaginary rights of the Roman See, the western part of the Roman empire was conquered by armies of barbarous people. Many of them were idolaters : partly by conviction, and partly by policy, they became Christians not long after. Indeed the Christian religion, though disfigured with errors, is so holy, and has such power over the soul, that the barbarian conquerors of Europe could not but respect it. The priests, who worked in their conversion, were in the pope's interest, and took care to instruct those ignorant men in all the false pretences on which the bishops of Rome had built their assumed superiority. Every thing that the Roman priests said was received as gospel : for our forefathers (you should know that we are all chiefly descended from those northern warriors) could neither write nor read, and were generally more illiterate than the merest clown in our own times. Thus things proceeded for ages ; whilst error grew more and more rooted, as it descended from father to son. There were now and then a few men, who, notwithstanding the general ignorance, applied themselves to the study of the Scriptures, and some were bold enough to declare that the popes were usurpers over Christian liberty. But the pretended successors of St. Peter were not so mild as that holy apostle, who submitted

to rebukes.¹ They had grown into proud tyrants, who commanded all Christian princes to put to death every one that dared to contradict papal authority. Many massacres were committed by order of the popes, and even good men were ready to dip their hands in the blood of those whom Rome had declared heretics. The spiritual usurpers had a great advantage in those times, when the art of printing was unknown. Perhaps you are not aware, my friend, that it is not yet four centuries since the only way that people had to publish books was to get them copied out by hand; so that one hundred Bibles cost the labour of seven thousand days, or nearly twenty years, the value of which it was necessary to pay to the men who lived by writing out books. Consider, then, the ignorance of the Scriptures in which the mass of the people must have lived, when none but very wealthy men could afford to purchase a Bible. The Romanists boast to the ignorant and unlettered, that the religion of Rome had been acknowledged as the only true one over all the world; and that it was uncontradicted till the time of Luther. In this they tell you what is not a fact: but observe, besides, that the silence of the Christian people, till that period, is a poor sort of approbation, for it is the approbation of gross ignorance. In proportion as knowledge increased, so complaints and protestations against Rome became more frequent. But in every case they were answered by fire and sword. The popish clergy used, besides, another shameful trick. Whenever there arose a set of men who opposed their usurpations, they published the most infamous calumnies against their opponents, and charged them with the grossest crimes of the most filthy and disgusting lust. This they did in the same manner, and on the same ground, that the old pagans had done against the primitive Christians. For as both the early Christians, and the opposers of the tyranny of

¹ See St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, chap. ii.

Rome, were obliged to avoid death by holding their religious assemblies in secret, their enemies made the world believe that they did shut themselves up for vicious and infamous purposes. This trick was the more hateful, as the clergy of the church of Rome, at that very time, were, in general, the most dissolute and profligate set that ever lived; and this I can prove by the confession of their own writers. But Providence would not allow this state of things to continue much longer; and, as learning increased, so the opposition to Rome grew stronger. From the beginning of the twelfth century, the numbers which, in various and distant parts of Christendom, stood up against the errors and tyranny of the popes, were every day upon the increase, and that in spite of the most fierce persecution on the part of the Romanists. The very means which were employed against them, however, contributed, under God's providence, to prepare the great defeat of the papal see, which took place four hundred years afterwards, by the preaching of Luther. As those who opposed the corruptions of popery were put to death, or spoiled of their property, and turned adrift upon the world, many of them took refuge in distant countries, such as Bulgaria, Hungary, and Bohemia, from whence their descendants, who had learnt to hate the oppression of the popes, returned in after times, and swelled the number of their opponents. There were also some clans or families of simple shepherds, who, like the Highlanders of Scotland, had lived all along confined to the valleys of the mountains which separate France from Italy. They were so poor and unknown, that the popes had either been ignorant of their existence, or thought it not worth the trouble to teach them their adulterated Christianity; so that these happy rustics preserved, by means of their poverty and simplicity, the doctrines of Christ such as they had received them from the early Christian missionaries, who spread the gospel before the popes had disfigured it with their inventions. Their

descendants live to this very day in the same spot, and are Protestants, notwithstanding the murders and burnings by which their sovereigns, the kings of Sardinia, strove, till very lately, to make them Romanists. An English clergyman, whom I have the pleasure of knowing, visited these good people not long ago, and found them most excellent Protestants. They have their bishops, priests, and deacons, and agree with us of the Church of England in every essential point of religious belief and practice. These simple and truly primitive Christians are known by the name of *Vaudois*.—Well, to return to my narrative: the persecuted opponents of the pope, who returned from the land of their exile, having joined with those who remained concealed in Europe, reappeared in growing numbers, and were called Albigenses. Pope Innocent III., in the year 1198, despatched several priests with orders to procure their destruction wherever they might be found. One of those who made most havoc among them is known and worshipped by the Roman Catholics, by the name of St. Dominic. He was one of the very first, if not the first, (for this is a question of words, and nothing else,) appointed heads of the Inquisition, a court of judges, whose only employment is to discover and punish those who reject the authority of the church of Rome. A large province of France had become, almost to a man, staunch opposers of popery. But the pope promised remission of all their sins to the king of France and his lords, if they would join to destroy his enemies. The horrors which the friends of the pope committed in that war exceed all imagination. You may judge by what happened on the taking of a town called *Beziers*. The Albigenses had shut up themselves in it, though there were also many Roman Catholics within its walls. The pope's troops were on the point of storming it, when the doubt occurred to the soldiers, how they were to distinguish the Romanists from the Albigenses, in order to spare the

first, without letting the pope's enemies escape. A priest, whom they consulted, answered them in these words: *Kill them all! God will know his own.* Upon hearing this, the soldiers entered the city, and put to the sword fifteen thousand persons. The same persecution, though not so fierce, was extended to Spain, and even to England, where thirty Albigenes were starved to death at Oxford.

R. I beg your pardon, Sir, for interrupting you: but I am longing to know whether you believe that those unfortunate creatures were real Protestants like ourselves.

A. They were certainly Protestants as far as opposition to the pope's tyranny and usurpation over the church of Christ is concerned, though I cannot answer for every point of doctrine which they held. But consider, my friend, the circumstances of those unhappy Christians. Their fathers had grown up under the dominion of the popes; in an age of universal ignorance. The Bible had been carefully kept from them, and it was with great difficulty and danger that they could meet to read some portions of it which had been translated into their language. How, then, could these poor people find out at once the truth, and avoid all sorts of errors, without competent and well educated teachers, and left, as they were, to grope for the true Gospel, not only in the dark, but under all the irritation and fear which a violent persecution must always produce? You see that it was impossible. This was only the outbreking of a beam of light, which gradually increased till the appointed time when Luther and the great Reformers of England were enabled to make a separation of the truths contained in the Bible, from the errors in which the church of Rome had involved them. My object in mentioning these facts is to show you, that in proportion as learning and an acquaintance with the Bible increased, the opposition to the pope's encroachments grew; and that the papal church was not with-

out public opponents, except when ignorance had overrun the world, and the Bible was almost unknown. The present pope is so well aware of this, that he has published a bull against the English and Foreign Bible Society, because, wherever the Bible makes its appearance without his own notes and interpretations, it never fails to raise him enemies. Can that be the *only true* church of God, whose greatest enemy is the pure word of God himself?

R. Surely not, Sir. But was there no true church of God from the time that popery began, till the *Reformation*? I recollect to have seen a Roman Catholic tract, where it was very strongly urged, that since Christ has promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against his church, the Roman Catholic church must all along have been in the right.

A. That is a very common argument of the Romanists: but it has no foundation except their own fancies about the infallibility of the church. Our Saviour did not promise that any particular church should never err; but that the light of his Gospel should never be completely put out by the contrivances and attacks of hell. Such is the meaning, you well know, of the words *to prevail*, or gain a victory. The light of revelation was very much dimmed and obscured, before Luther and the Reformers who established our church. Others had, long before them, complained of the obscurity, and tried, as well as they could, to remove it; but the means of Providence were not yet ready. Learning was very scarce till the invention of printing multiplied all sorts of books, and put the Bible into the hands of many. The printing-press had been spreading knowledge far and wide, for about seventy years, when Luther raised his voice, and the light of the Gospel shone again in its full splendour. The candle was the same that Christ had set on the candlestick: the pope had hid it under a bushel; but Luther, despising the threats of the spiritual tyrant, took it out of his keeping. Whoever

attentively considers the state of the Gospel before the Reformation, must be convinced that Luther was one of the most effectual instruments by which Christ prevented the victory of Satan over his church.

R. I am always at a loss when I would clearly understand what is meant by the church. Where is that church against which Christ tells us that Satan shall not prevail?

A. Let me answer you by a question, though I fear it will appear to you rather out of the way. Where is the plough that we pray God to speed?

R. Oh, Sir; we do not mean any particular plough. We only pray God to prosper and bless the labours of man to produce the staff of life.

A. Very well. Now, suppose that God had in the Scriptures promised that evil should never prevail against the *plough*; what would you understand by such words?

R. I believe they would mean that there should never be a famine over all the world, or that all the crops should never fail at once, so that it would be impossible to grow any more grain.

A. And what would you think if a club of farmers, with a rich man at their head, had established themselves in London, and wished to have a monopoly of all the corn on earth, saying to the government, "you must go to war to defend our rights; for God has said, that evil shall not prevail against the *plough*; and who can be *the plough*, but the head and company of farmers, of the county of Middlesex, wherein stands the great city of London, which is the first city of the world?"

R. I should certainly say that they were a set either of madmen or rogues, who wished to levy a tax upon all farmers, wherever they were.

A. I will now leave you to apply what we have said, to the use which the pope and his cardinals have made of Christ's promise, that Satan should *not prevail against his Church*. Church, in this passage, must be

understood in the sense in which we understand *plough*, speaking of agriculture in general. It must mean *Christianity* in general; not Christianity confined to the walls of any town. The meaning, therefore, of Christ's promise must be, that the devil shall never succeed in abolishing the faith in God through Christ, which has been published in the Gospel; not that the pope must always be in the right,—and much less that he is to be the spiritual lord of all the Christians on earth.

R. I can understand very well, that the promise of Christ cannot be confined to the church of Rome. But yet, Sir, is not the Church of Rome the *Catholic* Church; and do we not say in the Creed, that we believe in the Holy Catholic Church? One might suppose that, by these words we bind ourselves to believe in the Church of Rome.

A. I can hardly understand how an honest Roman Catholic, unless he is very ignorant, can use such an argument. The original signification of the word *catholic* is *universal*; meaning, probably, spread over all the world. But this cannot be literally applied to any denomination of Christians. In what particular sense it was used by the writer of that part of the creed in which the word *Catholic* is found, is of no great consequence to us; for you should know that the creed commonly called the *apostles'*, was not composed by them. The former part of it, down to "I believe in the Holy Ghost," is more ancient than the conclusion. The whole of that creed may be truly said to contain the doctrines taught by the apostles; but it is not their own composition. In regard, however, to the article on the Church, this must be clear to every one who considers the words of the creed—that the Church whose *being* or existence we profess to believe, is not any set of men who choose to call themselves the *Catholic Church*, but a Church that is HOLY, or (as it is explained immediately after) a Church that is the communion, or company of saints,—persons sanc-

tified by the Spirit of Christ, so as to be living members of his spiritual body. This society, this *holy Church*, is catholic, because it comprehends people of all nations, ranks, and conditions. But who the members of this *holy Catholic Church* are, is known only to HIM who sees into the heart. No *visible Church* can be properly called *holy*. Our Saviour himself has compared the whole of his kingdom on earth to "a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world¹." I have given you, my friend, the explanation which appears to me the clearest and most scriptural, as well as the best fitted for persons who, from want of learning, cannot well perceive the groundlessness, not to say childishness, of the argument taken from the word *Catholic*.

R. I remember, Sir, that in the other creed, the same article is expressed in the words, *I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church*. What is the meaning of that?

A. It shows the difficulty which the most numerous or most powerful party of Christians have found at all times, to express the visible marks of that *one true Church* which they wish to establish to the exclusion of all others. First they called their own party *Catholic* or universal; then, observing that it was difficult to reckon heads, and that the existence of a great number of dissenters clearly contradicted the claim of universality, they added the word *apostolic*. But every Church or party of Christians contends equally for that title; and consequently the difficulty remains where it was. The fact is, that as God has not been pleased to appoint any external marks by which to show his preference of one Church above another, men labour in vain about it. The idea of *one visible true*

¹ Matt. xiii. 47, 48.

Church, is groundless. If any clear marks of *one true Church* had been appointed, the apostles would have mentioned them in such a manner as would remove all doubt. Observe, however, that Paul and John, who frequently speak of false teachers, who lived in their own times, and gave them much trouble, never tell the Christians to go to Peter, or to any particular set of men, as the judges appointed by God over religious questions. If Paul had been aware that there was *one true Church*, commissioned by Christ to settle these questions, he could not do otherwise than tell the world plainly how this Church was to be known. But Paul does no such thing. When he complains, for instance, of Hymeneus and Philetus, "who had erred concerning the truth," and overthrew the faith of some, he refers the whole matter to God. "Nevertheless," (he says) "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." In regard, however, to external marks, he only adds, "let every one that nameth the name of Christ (that is, who calls himself a Christian,) depart from iniquity¹."

R. It appears to me, from what you say, that every man is left to judge for himself, in regard to the Church to which he is to belong.

A. Certainly.

R. And how is a poor unlearned man to judge?

A. He must judge as well as he can; employing, however, humble prayer, and proper diligence. He must, in the first place, embrace, with heart and soul, what is perfectly clear in the books of the New Testament. He must abstain from sinful courses, and endeavour by the study of the Scripture, and a constant desire of pleasing God, to increase in his heart the love of the Saviour. But when he has done all this, the inquiring Christian must finally settle in the church or congregation where he is convinced he has found the truth of the Gospel.

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19.

R. So you would not blame any man, who after hearing all you have to say against Romanism, would choose to remain a Roman Catholic.

A. "Who am I that I should judge another man's servant?" I am perfectly convinced that the Church of Rome has greatly corrupted the simplicity of the Christian doctrine; and I have accordingly separated myself from her communion. My duty is to declare this, my own conviction, that others may be assisted in judging for themselves. But I condemn doctrines, and not men.

R. I believe you said, Sir, that the Church of Rome has made additions to the Gospel out of her own fancy: has she also made any omissions in the articles of her faith?

A. No. It pleased Providence to preserve the whole of the Christian faith in her keeping, without diminution or curtailment. The true Gospel was thus kept entire during the ages of general ignorance, under the heap of her superstitions, like live seeds, which to spring up want nothing but the removal of some layer of stones and rubbish. Had she been permitted to cast off some of the essential articles of the apostolic doctrine, as other sects do, the work of the Reformation would have been difficult. But when Luther and the other Reformers had removed the superstitious additions of the Romanists, the whole truth, as it is in Christ, appeared very nearly in its original purity; and as both Rome and the Church of England agree in every thing which is really a part of the apostolic doctrine, we cannot be charged with innovation.

R. Yet they say that Protestants have a new religion.

A. You must not forget, that by the name *Protestant* we are only to understand a Christian who rejects the authority of the pope and his Church. In this there is no new religion, for the New Testament does not acknowledge such authority. The New Testament is the original charter of Christians; any thing

under the name of Christianity, which we do not find there, must be an abuse of more modern date than the charter. The additions made by the Church of Rome are, it is true, very old; but the foundations over which she has built her structure must be older still. That foundation, the *Testament*, is our religion; and we do not wish to prove our religion older than Christ.

R. I wish you would have the goodness to mention the additions and innovations which the Church of Rome has made to the true and scriptural religion of Christ.

A. I will, with great pleasure, in our next conversation.

DIALOGUE III.

Conduct of the Protestant Churches and of the Roman Catholic Church compared—Some Account of the Innovations made by Rome—Tradition—Transubstantiation—Confession—Relics and Images.

Author. I PROMISED at our last meeting, to give you an account of the innovations which the Church of Rome has made, and the human additions by which she has adulterated the pure doctrines of the Gospel. But, before I begin, I must ask your opinion upon a case which I heard some time ago.

Reader. I will give it you, Sir, to the best of my knowledge.

A. The people of two neighbouring islands, which acknowledged the authority of the same sovereign, received each a governor from the metropolis. One of the governors presented himself with his commission in one hand, and with the book of the colonial laws in the other. "Gentlemen," he said, "here is the king's commission, which authorizes me to govern

you according to these laws. I will direct my officers to get them printed, and every one of you shall have a copy in his possession. If ever any one of you should think that I am stepping beyond my powers, or governing against the laws, he may examine the point and consult his friends about it; and if, after all, he feels inclined not to be under me any longer, I will not at all molest him in his removal to the neighbouring island, carrying away every thing that belongs to him." The other governor pursued quite a different course. He appeared in the capital with all the pomp and show of a king. He gave out that he had authority from the sovereign, not only to govern according to the standing laws, but to make new statutes at his will and pleasure. At the same time, he employed his officers to deprive the people of all the copies of the colonial laws that were to be found, and published heavy penalties against any one who should possess or read them without his leave, or in a copy which had not his own interpretation of the statutes. Some high-spirited individuals presented a petition to the new governor, stating "that they were perfectly willing and ready to obey any one commissioned by their king; but still they conceived themselves entitled to possess a copy of the laws of the country; that if the monarch himself had empowered him to make additional laws, they would make no objection to that, provided he showed an authentic copy of his commission." The governor grew quite furious upon reading this remonstrance, and answered that he would not show any document relating to his power of making new laws; that the king had conferred upon him this privilege, not in writing, but by a message; and, finally, that if the petitioners did not obey him in silence, he would employ force against them. "De, Sir, but prove to us your commission from the king, and we are ready to obey without a murmur." "Take those fellows," said the governor, "and let them die by fire." The order being executed, a number of

citizens tried to escape from the island, but troops were stationed at every port and creek, and such as were found in the act of getting away were, without mercy, put to the sword, or confined to dungeons, till they swore that they would receive whatever the governor commanded, as if it had been a part of the book of the laws. To complete the picture of this governor, I will tell you that there was not one among the laws which he added to the written statutes of the colonies, but evidently procured both to him and to his officers an increase of wealth and power. The question I wish you to answer is, under which of these two governors would you advise a man to place himself?

R. I answer without a doubt,—under the first.

A. What! without any farther inquiry; without examining the book of colonial laws; without hearing the reasons of the other governor?

R. If I understood you rightly, the tyrant governor (for he deserves no better name) does not wish to settle the matter by reasoning: he wishes to be believed on his word, and puts to death even those who would avoid his power by flight. He must be an impostor,—an usurper, who grounds his authority on his own word, and his word on his tyranny.

A. Oh! my friend, how justly you have given your verdict! *The pope is* the man. My parable applies literally to the case between the Roman Church and the Protestants. We, the Protestant clergy, declare to the world, that our bishops, priests, and deacons, have no authority but what the Scriptures confer upon us, for the instruction and edification of the people. We show them our commission in the book of God's word, and leave them to judge whether they are bound or not to listen to our instructions. If any one wishes to leave us, he is at liberty to do so: we use no arts, no compulsion, to keep any one within the pale of our church. To those who remain under our guidance we give no other rule or law but the Scripture; our articles declare that nothing contained in

them is to be believed on any other consideration but the clear warrant of the holy Scriptures. But hear the conditions which the pope presents to mankind : " Come to me," he says, " as you wish to be saved ; for none can escape the punishment of hell who rejects my authority." I ask him for the proof that God has limited salvation, by making it pass exclusively through his hands. He answers me, that he and his clergy or Church have received the power of interpreting the Scriptures, and adding to them several articles of faith ; and that, by virtue of that power, I must believe what he affirms. I rejoin, that if the Scriptures said that the bishop of Rome and his Church were to be the infallible interpreters of the written word of God, and that they had power to add to the laws therein contained, I should be ready to obey : but since the Scriptures are silent upon a point of such importance, I will not believe the pope, who is the party that would gain by the forced interpretation of those passages on which he wishes to build his power over the whole Church. He now grows angry, and calls me a heretic, protesting that the Scripture is clear as to his being the head of the Church, and vicar of Christ. Are the Scriptures so clear in favour of your authority, my lord the pope ? Why, then, are you and yours so alarmed when you see the Scriptures in the hands of the people ? If your commission from God is clear, why do you not allow every man, woman, and child, to read it ? Because (says the pope) they are ignorant. Ignorant, indeed ! is the meanest child too ignorant to know the person whom his father appoints to teach him ? Is a stranger to drag a child away, and keep him under his control, without the father saying, " this is to be your teacher ; I wish you to obey him like myself ?" The only thing, in fact, which the child can perfectly understand, is the appointment of the person who is to be his tutor : and are we to be told, that, because the mass of Christians are children in knowledge, they must blindly believe

the man who presents himself. rod in hand, saying to them, "follow me, for I have a letter of your father's, in which he desires you to be under my command?" "Show me the letter," says the Christian. "You are a silly babe," says the pope, "and must let me explain the letter to you." "Yes," says the Christian, "but all I want is to see that my father mentions your name, and desires me to obey you." "No:" is the pope's answer; "my name is not in the letter, but St. Peter's name is there: St. Peter was at Rome, and I am at Rome, and, therefore, it is clear that you must obey me." "But tell me, I pray you, my lord the pope, does the letter say even that St. Peter was ever at Rome?" "No; but I tell you he was," says the holy father. "Still another question, good my lord: is it in the letter, that Peter was to govern all Christians more than any other of the apostles as long as he lived?" "The letter does not say it, but I do." "So it seems that all your authority must depend, not upon any command of my heavenly Father, but upon your own word. If so, I will not follow you; but put myself under instructors who will read my Father's words to me, without requiring from me more than what I find therein enjoined." Happy, my friend, is that Christian who can speak thus out of the pope's grasp; for he is a fierce schoolmaster, and would tear the skin off any one's back who should not take his word in points relating to his authority.

R. I see, Sir, that the pope is just like the proud usurping governor you described. He grounds his claims on his own authority, and supports his authority by the sword. But what strikes me above all, is his fear of the Scriptures. If the Scriptures were favourable to him, he would not object to their free circulation. I believe you said that the pope had introduced many things into the Church which are not to be found in the Scriptures.

A. Very many, indeed; and what is still more remarkable, not one of which but is decidedly to his

own profit. Here again the comparison between the pope and the Protestant clergy is enough to decide any rational man who is in doubt what church to follow. Any one who is capable of making the comparison, will clearly perceive, that on whatever points the Church of Rome, and the Protestant Churches (especially ours of England) agree, the Scriptures are their common foundation. But as soon as they disagree, the Church of Rome is seen striving after wealth and power in the articles which she adds to the Scriptures; while the Protestant clergy evidently relinquish both emolument and influence, by their refusal to follow the Romanists beyond the authority of the word of God. I will give you instances of this, as I proceed in the enumeration of the principal points of difference.

Tradition is one of the most essential subjects of dispute between Protestants and Romanists. The Romanists declare that the Scriptures alone are not sufficient for salvation; but that there is the word of God by *hearsay*, which is superior to the word of God in *writing*. By this *hearsay*, for tradition is nothing else, they assure the world that the Scripture must be explained; so that if the Scripture says *white*, and tradition says *black*, a Roman Catholic is bound to say, that *white* means *black* in God's written word.

R. But, Sir, how can they be sure of that hearsay or tradition? Every one knows how little we can depend on reports.

A. They pretend a kind of perpetual inspiration, a miraculous knowledge which can distinguish the true from the false traditions. The existence, however, of that miracle, people must take upon their assertion.

R. And who do they say has that miraculous knowledge?

A. Their divines are not well agreed about it. Some say the miracle is constantly worked in the

pope ; others believe that it does not take place but when the pope and his bishops meet in council.

R. Then, after all, the Romanists cannot be certain at any time that the miracle has taken place. Would it not be better to abide by the Scriptures, and judge of those *hearsays* or traditions by what we certainly know to be God's word ?

A. That is exactly what we Protestants do.

R. Yet one difficulty occurs to me. Is it not by a kind of *hearsay* or tradition that we know the New Testament to have been really written by the Apostles and Evangelists ?

A. What then ?

R. You see, Sir, that tradition seems to be a good ground of faith.

A. Now, tell me : if you had the title-deeds of an estate, which had descended from father to son, till they came into your possession, what would you say to an attorney who should come to you with a *hearsay*, that the original founder of the estate had desired his descendants to submit their lands and chattels to the family of the said attorney, that they might keep it and manage it for ever, explaining every part of the title-deeds according to the traditional knowledge of their family ?

R. I should be sure to show him the way out of my house, without hearing another word about his errand.

A. Yet he might say, your title-deeds are only known to be genuine by *tradition*.

R. Yes, Sir ; but the title-deeds are something substantial, which may be known to be the same which my father received from my grandfather, and again my grandfather from his father, and so on ; but there is no putting seals or marks on flying words.

A. Well, you have answered most clearly one of the strongest arguments by which the Romanists endeavour to palm their traditions on the world. As

long as the Christians who had received instructions from the mouth of the apostles were alive, Saint Paul, for instance, might say to the Thessalonians, "*Hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle*," because they could be sure that the words they had heard were Saint Paul's: but what mark could have been put on these unwritten words, to distinguish them as the true words of the apostle, after they had passed through the hands of three or four generations?

R. What is, after all, the advantage which the pope derives from these traditions?

A. They are to him of the most essential service. Without *tradition* his hands would be tied up by Scripture; but, by placing the Scripture under the control of these *hearsays*, the pope and his Church have been able to build up the monstrous system of their power and ascendancy. You know that one of the principal articles of the Roman Catholics is *transubstantiation*. This article would be searched for in vain in the Scriptures; for though our Saviour said of the bread, "this is my body," and of the wine, "this is my blood," the apostles could not understand these words in a corporeal sense, as if Christ had said to them that he was holding himself in his own hands. Consequently, Saint Paul did not believe that the bread and wine were converted into the material Christ, by the words of consecration: but though he calls these signs the communion of the body and blood of Christ, he also calls them bread and cup². But as it was natural that the signs appointed by Christ to represent his body and blood, should be treated with reverence, there arose, in the earliest times, among Christians a confused notion of a *material* sanctity in the consecrated bread and wine. The clergy, partly from mistaken piety, and partly from a secret feeling of the increased importance which the notion conferred

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 15.

² 1 Cor. x. 16.

upon them, spoke of the elements used in the Lord's Supper, in a style of the most extravagant kind. This, of course, helped to increase the superstitious notions which were originally conceived by many of the laity. Thus, after many centuries, the Church of Rome, becoming fully aware of the advantages which arose to its clergy from the belief that every priest could bring Christ to his hands, by means of a few words, declared this doctrine as an article of faith necessary to salvation. The people were, therefore, told that the pope knew by *tradition*, that, by the words of consecration, every particle of bread and wine was converted into the body of our Saviour: that if you divide a consecrated wafer¹ into atoms, every one of those atoms contains a whole God and man; and that the presence is so material, that if, as it has happened sometimes, a mouse eats up part of the consecrated bread, it certainly eats the body of Christ; and that, if a person should be seized with sickness, so as to throw up the contents of his stomach immediately after receiving the sacrament, the filth should be gathered up carefully and kept upon the altar: this I have seen done. I could relate many more absurdities, which would shock any but a Roman Catholic, to whom habit has made them familiar. I must not, however, give up this subject without pointing more particularly to the advantages which the doctrine of transubstantiation brings to the Roman Catholic clergy.

I have already told to you the superstitious veneration which the Roman Catholics pay to their priests. A priest, even when raised to that office from the lowest of the people, is entitled to have his hands kissed with the greatest reverence by every

¹ The Roman Catholics use not common bread for the Sacrament, but a white wafer with the figure of a cross made upon it, by the mould in which the wafer is baked. By this means they remove the common appearance of bread, which would be too striking and visible an argument against their doctrine.

one, even a prince of his communion. Children are taught devoutly to press their innocent lips upon those hands, to which, as they are told; the very Saviour of mankind, who is in heaven, comes down daily. The laws of some Roman Catholic countries are, with regard to priests, made according to the spirit of these religious notions:—a priest cannot be tried by the judges of the land for even the most horrible crimes. Murders of the most shocking nature have often been perpetrated by priests in my country: but I do not recollect an instance of their being put to death, except when the murdered person was also a priest. I knew the sister of a young lady who was stabbed to the heart at the door of the church, where the murderer, who was her confessor, had, a few minutes before, given her absolution! He stabbed her in the presence of her mother, to prevent the young lady's marriage, which was to take place that day. This monster was allowed to live, because he was a priest.—What but the belief in transubstantiation could secure to the clergy impunity of this kind? Even in Ireland, where the law makes no difference between man and man, a priest can take liberties with the multitude, and exert a despotic command over them, which the natural spirit of the Irish would not submit to from the first nobleman in the kingdom. For all this the Catholic clergy have to thank *tradition*, for without that pretended source of revelation, it would have been impossible to make whole nations believe that a priest (as they declare) can turn a wafer into God.

R. Was it not in the power of the Reformers to have preserved the same veneration to themselves by encouraging the belief in transubstantiation?

A. It was so much in their power, that even when England had shaken off the authority of the pope, many were burnt alive for denying the coporeal presence of Christ in the sacrament. The mass of the people were so blind and obstinate upon that point,

that not one of the Protestant Martyrs of the reign of Queen Mary but could have saved his life by declaring in favour of transubstantiation. Nothing, indeed, but an almost supernatural courage, and an apostolic love of revealed truth, could have enabled the Protestant clergy to oppose and subdue the Romanist doctrine of the sacrament.

R. I believe, Sir, that the doctrine you speak of, was valuable to the clergy in other respects.

A. It was, and is still, to the Romanist priesthood a never-failing source of profit. I do not mean to attribute interested views to individual priests. In all ages and countries, and under all denominations, some men may be found who deceive for the sake of their own advantages. But it is most unfair to suspect any individual of deliberate imposture, unless we have strong grounds to support such suspicions. But, at the same time, you must remember that large bodies of men will do things of which few individuals of that body would not be ashamed, if done or permitted by them singly. So it is in regard to the advantages derived by the Romanist clergy from the belief in transubstantiation. The notion that they have the power of offering up the whole living person of Christ, whenever they perform mass, paved the way to the doctrine which makes the mass itself a repetition of the great sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. Under the idea that the priest who performs the bloodless sacrifice, as they call it, can appropriate the whole benefit of it to the individual whom he mentions in his secret prayer before or after consecration, the Roman Catholics are eager all over the world to purchase the benefit of masses for themselves; to obtain the favour of saints by having the masses done in their praise; and finally to save the souls of their friends out of purgatory by the same means.

R. I have heard a great deal about purgatory; but I do not exactly understand what the doctrine is which the Romanists hold about it.

A. They believe that there is a place very like hell, where such souls as die, having received absolution of their sins, are made to undergo a certain degree of punishment; like criminals who, being saved from the gallows, are kept to hard work as a means of correction. There is a strong mixture of a very ancient heresy in the religious system of the Roman Catholics, which leads them to attribute to pain and suffering the power of pleasing God. It was that notion that first produced the idea of purgatory; and it is the same notion that induces the devout and sincere among them almost to kill themselves with stripes, with fasts, and many other self-inflicted penances.

R. I have heard that the heathen in India do the same.

A. The religious practices of those heathens, and many among the Roman Catholics, are remarkably similar. But we must not lose sight of the offspring of Roman Catholic *tradition*, and the profitable account to which the Church of Rome has turned it. *Tradition* alone could have been brought to the aid of purgatory. But the doctrine once being received by the people, became a true gold-mine to the pope and his priesthood. This was obtained by teaching the Roman Catholics, that the pope, as vicar of Christ, had the power to relieve or release the souls in purgatory, by means of what they call indulgences. These indulgences were so frequently purchased in all countries before the Reformation, that kings and governments, even such as were staunch Catholics, bitterly complained that the popes drained their kingdoms of money. Incalculable treasures have flowed into the lap of the Roman Catholic clergy, for which they have to thank the doctrine of purgatory. The reason is clear:—the pope knew too well his interest, not to tack the doctrine of transubstantiation and the mass on that of the souls in purgatory fire. If a mass, they said, is a repetition of the great sacrifice on the cross, and it is in the power of the priest to apply the ben-

fit of it to any one, then, by sending such a relief to a soul in purgatory, that soul has the greatest chance of being set free from those burning flames, and of entering at once into heaven. Who that believes this doctrine will spare his pocket when he thinks that his dearest relations are asking the aid of a mass to escape out of the burning furnace! You will find, accordingly, that no Roman Catholic who can afford it, omits to pay as many priests as possible to say masses for his deceased relations and friends: and that the poor of that persuasion, both in England and Ireland, establish clubs for the purpose of collecting a fund, out of which a certain number of masses are to be purchased for each member that dies. Their accounts are regularly kept, and if any member dies without having paid his subscription, he is allowed to be tormented to the full amount of his debt in the other world, where the difference between rich and poor, according to these doctrines, is greater than in this life. A rich man may sin away, and, having obtained absolution, settle the remainder of his debt with masses: the poor must be a beggar even at the very gates of heaven, and trust to his savings, properly kept and improved by a club, or to the charity of the rich, to escape out of that purgatory which you may properly call the *debtor's rule* of hell.

R. Perhaps the Romanists will say that God will not allow the rich people to get off by the great number of masses, but will give the benefit of them to the poor.

A. So they say, when the absurdity of their doctrine stares them in the face. But even this contrivance to evade the difficulty objected to their doctrine, has been turned into an increase of profit to the clergy. "Since," it is said, "no man can be certain that more masses, or indulgences, will be allowed to a person for whom they are purchased, it becomes those who have worldly means to repeat the request as often as possible, that your friend or

yourself may at last have his turn." You see, therefore, that even the doubts which might have endangered the sale of the popish wares, are made, by an effort of ingenuity, to increase the demand in the market. Without the fresh discovery, that God appropriates to the more deserving poor the masses and indulgences sent to the wealthy dead, a mass or plenary indulgence a head, would be more than sufficient to keep purgatory empty. The case is very different when you are acquainted with the doubt in which you must be left as to the effect of your purchases; so that, if possible, you must continue them for ever.

R. What do you mean by indulgences?

A. That wonderful storehouse of knowledge, *tradition*, has informed the popes that there is somewhere an infinite treasure of spiritual merits, of which they have the key; so that they may give to any one a property in them, to supply the want of their own. A man, for instance, has been guilty of murder, adultery, and all the most horrid crimes, during a long life; but he repents on his death-bed; the priest gives him absolution, and his soul goes to purgatory. There he might be for millions of years; but if you can procure him a full or plenary indulgence from the pope, or if he obtained it before death, all the merits which he wanted are given him, and he flies direct to heaven.

R. Sir, are you really in earnest?

A. You have only to look into the *London Roman Catholic Directory*, and you will find the appointed days, when every individual of that persuasion is empowered by the pope to liberate one soul out of purgatory by means of a plenary indulgence. These indulgences are sold in Spain by the king, who buys them from the pope, and retails them with great profit. I have told you, my friend, and will continue to prove it, that there is not a doctrine for which the Church of Rome contends against the Protestants, but is a source of profit or power (which comes to the same) in the hands of the clergy. Indeed, I could fill volumes up

this subject ; but time presses, and I must not omit saying a few words about Confession. Do you not perceive, in an instant, that whoever has a man's conscience in his keeping, must have the whole man in his power ?

R. It appears to me impossible to doubt it ; and, in fact, the better the man, the more he must be in the power of his priest, for the priest is his conscience, and the good man is most anxious to follow that which conscience suggests.

A. Never, my good friend, was a plan of usurpation and tyranny set up that can equal that of the Church of Rome in boldness. Her object is to deprive men both of their understanding and their will, and make them blind tools of her own. She proclaims that the perfection of faith consists in reducing one's mind to an implicit belief in whatever doctrines she holds, without any examination, or with a previous resolution to abide by her decision, whether, after examination, they appear to you true or false. She then declares a renunciation of one's conscience into the hands of her priests the very height of human perfection. Let those who in England are trying every method of disguising the Roman Catholic doctrine, show a single pious book of common reputation in the Roman Catholic Church, which does not make unlimited obedience to a confessor, or religious superior, the safest and most perfect way to salvation. No, I should not hesitate to assert it in the hearing of all the world : in the same proportion as a Roman Catholic has an understanding and a will of his own upon religious matters, or matters connected in any way with religion, in that same degree he acts against the duties to which he is bound by his religious profession.

R. I do not well understand the Romanist belief on the necessity of Confession.

A. The Romanist Church makes the confession of every sin by *thought*, *word*, and *deed*, necessary pre-
requisite to receiving absolution from a priest ; and

teaches that, without absolution, when there is a possibility of obtaining it, God will not grant remission of sins. The most sincere repentance, according to the Catholics, is not sufficient to save a sinner, without confession and absolution, where there is a possibility of applying to a priest. On the other hand, they assert that even imperfect repentance, a sorrow arising from the fear of hell, which they call *attrition*, will save a sinner who confesses and receives absolution. The evident object of doctrines so inconsistent with the letter and spirit of the Scriptures, is, no doubt, that of making the priesthood absolute masters of the people's consciences. They must some time or other (every Roman Catholic is, indeed, bound to confess at least once a year, under pain of excommunication) entrust a priest with the inmost secrets of their hearts; and this, under the impression that if any one sin is suppressed from a sense of shame, absolution makes them guilty of sacrilege. The effects of this bondage, the reluctance which young people, especially, have to overcome, and the frequency of their making up their minds to garble Confession, in spite of their belief that they increase the number and guilt of their sins by silence, are evils which none but a Roman Catholic priest can be perfectly acquainted with.

R. I thought, Sir, that Confession acted as a check upon men's consciences, and that it often caused restitution of ill-gotten money.

A. I never hear that paltry plea, so frequently used by Roman Catholic writers in this country, without indignation. It seems as if they wished to bribe men's love of money to the support of their doctrines. In a case where the main interests of religion and morality are so deeply concerned, it is a sort of insult to hold up the chance of recovering money through the hands of a priest, as if to draw the attention from the monstrous evils which are inseparable from the Romanist Confession. The truth is, that restitution is not a whit more probable among Roman Catholics, than

among any other denomination of Christians. There is not a Protestant who does not firmly believe the necessity of restitution in order to obtain pardon from God. Though I have lived only fifteen years¹ in a Protestant country, the voluntary restitution of a sum of money by a poor person, whom the grace of God had called to a truly Christian course of life, has happened within my notice. I acted as a confessor, in Spain, for many years, and from my own experience can assure you, that Confession does not add one single chance of restitution. I believe, on the contrary, that the generality of Roman Catholics depend so much on the mysterious power which they attribute to the absolution of the priest, that they greatly neglect the conditions on which that absolution is often given. The Protestant, who earnestly and sincerely wishes for pardon from God, knows that he cannot obtain it unless he is equally earnest in his endeavours to make restitution; but when the Romanist has assured the confessor that he will try his best to indemnify those he has injured, the words of absolution are to him a sort of charm, that removes the guilt at once, and consequently relieves his uneasiness about restitution. One of the greatest evils of Confession is, that it has changed the genuine *repentance* preached in the Gospel—that conversion and change of life which is the only true external sign of the remission of sins through Christ—into a ceremony which silences remorse at the slight expense of a doubtful, temporary sorrow for past offences. As the day of Confession approaches (which, for the greatest part, is hardly once a year) the Romanist grows restless and gloomy. He mistakes the shame of disclosure for sincere repentance of his sinful actions. He, at length, goes through the disagreeable task, and feels relieved. The old score is now cancelled, and he may run into spiritual debt with a lighter heart. This I know from my own experience, both as confessor and

* This was written in 1825.

as penitent. In the same characters, and from the same experience, (though I have to thank God that through a natural sense of honour, there is not the least subject of remorse upon my conscience connected with the manner in which I exercised my priestly authority) I can assure you that the practice of Confession is exceedingly injurious to the purity of mind enjoined in the Scriptures. "Filthy communication" is inseparable from the confessional: the priest, in the discharge of the duty imposed on him, by his Church, is bound to listen to the most abominable descriptions of all manner of sins. He must inquire into every circumstance of the most profligate course of life. Men and women, the young and the old, the married and the single, are bound to describe to the confessor the most secret actions and thoughts, which are either sinful in themselves, or may be so from accidental circumstances. Consider the danger to which the priests themselves are exposed—a danger so imminent, that the popes have, on two occasions, been obliged to issue the most severe laws against confessors who openly attempt the seduction of their female penitents. I will not, however, press this subject, because it cannot be done with sufficient delicacy. Let me conclude by observing, that no invention of the Roman Church equals this, as regards the power it gives to the priesthood.

R. I cannot help wondering how the Church of Rome could persuade men to submit to such a revolting and dangerous practice as that of Confession.

A. This enormous abuse grew up gradually and imperceptibly, together with the whole of the Romanist system. It was the practice in the beginning of the Christian Church, to exclude the scandalous sinners from public worship, till they had shown their repentance by confessing their misconduct before the congregation. This discipline was found, in the course of some time, to be impracticable; and the act of humiliation, which at first was required to be public, was

changed into a private acknowledgment to the bishop of such sins only as had occasioned the exclusion of the sinner from church at the time of worship. The bishops, a little after, began to refer such acts of public reconciliation with the Church to some of their priests. The growing ignorance of after-times made people believe that this act of external reconciliation was a real absolution of the moral guilt of sin; and the Church of Rome, with that perpetual watchfulness by which she has never omitted an opportunity of increasing her power, foisted upon the Christian world what she calls the sacrament of penance, obliging her members, as they wish for pardon of their sins, to reveal them to a priest.

R. Is there nothing in Scripture to support that practice?

A. Nothing but the word *confessing*, which, as you will observe, means only, wherever it occurs, the acknowledgment of our sins before God; or, that of our mutual faults to our fellow Christians. *Confess your faults one to another*, says St. James¹. The Romanist will make us believe, that by *one to another*, the holy apostle means confessing to the priest. By thus distorting the sense of the Scripture, and calling in the convenient help of their own invented tradition, they have set no limits to their encroachments upon the spiritual liberty of the Christian world. Their love of power had, indeed, carried them so far, that in enlarging the foundations of their influence, they established some of their doctrines without even a word in the Scriptures on which to build their fanciful systems. Have you ever found any mention of relics in the Bible; or do you recollect that it ever mentions images, but to forbid the worshipping of them?

R. Certainly not. But do you believe, Sir, that relics and images are also instruments of power to the Church of Rome?

¹ Chap. v. ver. 16.

A. The city of Rome has carried on, for ages, a trade in bones, which, besides the donations in money, (for they avoid receiving money as *payment*,) made by those, who from all parts of the world come or send thither to procure them, has been the cause of building churches, with large endowments for the clergy, in almost every province in Christendom.

R. But were those bones really from the bodies of the saints whose names they gave to them?

A. Nothing can equal the impudence with which the bones really taken out of the public burial grounds, where the ancient Romans buried their slaves, have been sent about under the names of all the martyrs, confessors, and virgins, mentioned in the Roman Catholic legends. The pope claims the power of what is called *christening* relics, and the devout Romanists believe that when their holy father has thus given a name to a skull or a thigh bone, it is equally valuable as if it had been taken from the body of their favourite saint. They are not generally aware that what is thus *christened*, is probably part of the skeleton of some ancient heathen. But to give you an idea of the credulity which the popes have encouraged on this point, I have seen the treasury of relics which belongs to the kings of Spain; where the monk who keeps it, shows to all who come to visit the church of the *Escorial*, near Madrid, the whole body, as it is pretended, of one of the children who were put to death by Herod. But there is still a more monstrous piece of impudence in the same exhibition. A glass vial, set in gold, is shown, with some milk of the Virgin Mary. These and a hundred other such relics are presented to be worshipped by the people; all duly certified by the pope or his ministers. At the cathedral of Seville, the town where I was born, there is, among other relics, one of the teeth of Christopher, a saint who is said to have been a giant. The tooth was procured from Rome, and is to be seen in a silver and glass casket, through which the holy relic may be admired by

the worshippers. It is clear, however, that the tooth, before which the pope allows his spiritual children to kneel, belonged to a huge animal of the elephant kind. These impositions have been at all times carried on so carelessly by the Romish priesthood, that it was necessary, in some cases, to declare that the bodies of some saints had been miraculously multiplied: else people would have discovered the fraud by finding the same saint at different places. The priests themselves are often aware of these absurdities; but they must bow their heads in silence. I will, however, tell you a good joke of a French priest of high rank, who having no religion himself, as it often happens to those of his profession in Roman Catholic countries, submitted quietly to the established superstition, though he would now and then give vent to a humorous sneer. He had been travelling in Italy, and in the Catholic parts of Germany, where the collection of relics, kept in every great church, had been boastingly displayed to him. The priests of a famous abbey in France were doing the same, when among other wonders, "here," they said to the traveller, "is the head of John the Baptist."—"Praised be heaven!" answered the wag-gish priest, "this is the third head of the holy Baptist which I have been happy enough to hold in my hands." I have before me an original certificate, dated *Rome, 7th May, 1826*, signed and sealed by Fr. Joseph Perugini, a bishop and keeper of the pope's collection of relics, called *sacrarium*, making it known that in a silver gilt case, of which a description is given, there are, "*most indubitably contained*," particles of the column of our Lord Jesus Christ, (i. e. of the column to which, according to an unfounded tradition, he is said to have been bound when scourged,) of the dress of the Virgin Mary, of the cloak of St. Joseph, her husband, and of the bones of St. Sebastian. Such barefaced impostures, so solemnly authorized, ought to make every spiritual subject of the Pope instantly forsake their treacherous guide.

R. I hope the jolly priest did not pay dear for his wit.

A. It would have been a serious matter in Spain : but there has always existed a very strong party of disguised infidels in France, where the pope never succeeded in his attempts to establish the Inquisition. The consequence was, that the priests were greatly checked by the general laugh which was often raised against them. He that would know genuine Popery, must go to Spain—the country where it has been allowed to grow and unfold itself into full size. There you would see all the engines of Rome at work, and perfectly understand the true and original object of her inventions. To show you at one glance the benefit derived by the priests from image worship, I will tell you what happened at Madrid, during a residence of three years, which I made in that most Catholic capital. In one of the meanest parts of the town the ragged children, who are always running about the streets, found an old picture which had been thrown, with other rubbish, upon a dunghill. Not knowing what the picture was, they tied it to a piece of rope, and were dragging it about, when an old woman in the neighbourhood looked at the canvas, and found upon it the head of a Virgin Mary. Her screams of horror at the profanation which she beheld scared away the children, and the old woman was left in possession of the treasure. The gossips of the neighbourhood were anxious to make some amends to the picture for the past neglect and ill-treatment, and they all contributed towards the expence of burning a lamp, day and night, before it, in the old woman's house. A priest getting scent of what was going on, took the scratched virgin under his patronage, framed the canvas, and added another light. All the rich folks who heard of this new-found image, came to pray before it, and gave something to the priest and the old woman, who were now in close partnership. In a very short time the amount of the daily donations enabled the joint pro-

prietors of the picture to build a fine chapel, with a comfortable house adjoining it for themselves. The chapel was crowded from morning till night ; not a female, high or low, but firmly believed that her life and safety depended upon the favour of that particular picture : the rich endeavoured to obtain it by large sums of money for masses to be performed, and candles to be burnt before it ; and the poor stinted their necessary food to throw a mite into the box which hung at the door of the chapel. I do not relate to you old stories : I state what I myself have seen. Yet, what happened at Madrid under my own eyes had constantly taken place in the popish kingdoms of Europe, till the Reformation gave a check to the Romanist priesthood. There is scarcely a town or village of some note in Europe but had a rich sanctuary, where monks lived, mostly in vice and idleness, at the expence of the neighbourhood. The origin of these places was perfectly similar every where : a shepherd found an image of the Virgin in the hollow of a tree ; (most assuredly placed there on purpose to be thus found ;) an old woman drew another from the bottom of a well ; a stranger had asked for lodgings for a night at a cottage—he was not to be found in the morning ; but, on searching the room where he slept, a small Virgin Mary was discovered. The nearest bishop was sure to come with his priests, holding lighted tapers, and carry such images in procession to his church ; and declare that they had been miraculously sent to the faithful ! Those found in the tree and well, had fallen from heaven : the vanished stranger was an angel, who had carved the image during the night.

R. Such images put me in mind of what is said in the *Acts of the Apostles* about the great Diana of the Ephesians, which had fallen from heaven, and for the sake of which the people made a riot, in which they would have murdered Saint Paul¹.

¹ Acts xix. 35.

A. The Church of Rome has so closely copied the idolatrous superstitions of the pagans, that all persons not blinded by the fanatic zeal of that Church are struck with the great similarity. Their lighted candles, their frankincense, their images from heaven, many ceremonies of their mass, many forms of their private worship, are just the same as formed a part of the service done formerly to the idols of the heathens. Even the manner of acknowledging the pretended miracles, by hanging up in the temples little figures of wax, or pictures representing the part of the body which is supposed to have been supernaturally healed, or the accident from which the person escaped, is constantly practised, wherever the pope alone directs his flock, without fearing a laugh from Protestant neighbours. If the figures acknowledging miracles performed by images throughout the realms of popery were to be reckoned, the miracles would amount to some hundreds a day.

R. But how can people believe in such a number of miracles?

A. The Church of Rome, my friend, is like a large and showy quack-medicine shop. There is not a disease, not an evil, for which the pope has not a *labelled* saint. People, when in fear of actual suffering, are apt to receive a certain relief from hope. You have only to say, try this or that medicine, and you will see the patient's eyes light up, like the poor man who has a kind of foretaste of riches from the moment he purchases a lottery ticket. The pope's spiritual quack-medicines are to be applied without doubt or hesitation, and not to be given up in despair; all you are allowed is to add some new saint to your former patron. Well, a poor creature is writhing with the toothache; he goes to the pope's shop, and finds that Saint Apollonia had all her teeth pulled out, and, therefore, takes pity on those who suffer pain in the teeth. He prays, buys a print of the saint, and lights up a candle before it. If the pain goes off, Saint

Apollonia cured him; if at last the tooth is drawn, Saint Apollonia blunted the pain of the operation. So it is with every disease, with every undertaking,—a journey, a speculation; even the most sinful and wicked actions are often commended by the lower classes of Roman Catholics to the care of their patron saint. Of this I have the most positive certainty. Miracles being thus expected at all times, and means supposed to possess a supernatural virtue being constantly used, under the idea that the most effectual way of receiving the looked-for benefit, is a strong persuasion of their efficacy, and a rejection of all doubt, (for doubt offends the implored saint) every accident is construed into a wonder: the failures are attributed to a want of faith, and the success, either complete or partial, which would have infallibly taken place in the natural course of things, is confidently proclaimed as a display of supernatural power. Add to this, that among the Roman Catholics there is a very common feeling of the same kind as that which anticipates thanks for the sake of securing favour. They, in fact, give credit to their saints beyond what they really believe, and flatter them by public acknowledgments, which they mean as a before-hand payment, which, in common honesty, must bind the receiver to complete the work. All this is done, not with an intent to deceive, but from that utter weakness of mind which a man cannot fail to contract, when brought up under a complete system of quackery, either spiritual or temporal: a system which encourages all sorts of fears, to insure the sale of imaginary remedies against them.

R. Do you think, Sir, that all Roman Catholics are in such a state of mind?

A. By no means. There are various circumstances which make individual minds resist, more or less, the influence of their church. But this I can assure you, before the whole world, that whoever submits entirely to the guidance of Rome, must become a weak, superstitious being; unless his natural temper should dispose

him to join with superstition the violence and persecuting spirit of the bitterest bigotry.

R. If you can prove what you so broadly assert, I shall infer, that while the Roman Catholics uphold their Church for the sake of possessing an unerring guide, and thus having a decided advantage over the Protestant churches, who allow their members to exercise their judgment upon religious matters; it is only individual judgment and natural good sense that make Romanism assume a decent appearance among us.

A. Keep to your inference till we can renew this conversation, when I trust I shall satisfy you that it is supported by the most undeniable facts. Remember that I undertake to prove, that the Church of Rome leads her members into the most abject and lamentable superstition, credulity, and bigotry; that she keeps her subjects in bondage by the most tyrannical means; and that she is always ready to force men into subjection to her authority, in the same measure as they are off their guard to resist her encroachments.

DIALOGUE IV.

Superstitious Character of the Church of Rome: her Doctrine on Penance: her Miracles examined: Misery produced by her Will-worship: Apostolic Doctrine of Justification: Effects of Celibacy and Religious Vows: Persecuting Spirit of Romanism.

Author. I COME prepared to describe to you the character of the Church of Rome; and, in the first place, I am to prove that she exerts her whole power in making her members superstitious. I must, however, ask you, before I proceed, whether you have a clear idea of what is meant by the word *superstition*.

Reader. I believe I have a tolerably good notion of it; but, to say the truth, I should be at a loss to state clearly what I understand by that word.

A. My notion of it may be expressed thus : superstition consists in credulity, hopes, and fears, about invisible and supernatural things, upon fanciful and slight grounds. We call that man superstitious, who is ready to believe any idle story of ghosts and witches : who nails a horse-shoe upon the ship or barn, which he hopes by that means to preserve in safety : and dreads evil consequences from going out of doors the first time in the morning with his left foot foremost.

R. Does the Church of Rome encourage superstitions of this kind ?

A. She certainly encourages the same state of mind, though not exactly upon the same things. Every church may be compared to a great school or establishment for religious education. I will represent to you a pupil of that school, that you may infer what is taught in it ; and I will draw the picture from various Roman Catholics whom I have intimately known. Imagine my Romanist friend retiring to his bed in the night. The walls of the room are covered with pictures of all sizes. Upon a table there is a wooden or brass figure of our Saviour nailed to the cross, with two wax candles, ready to be lighted, at each side. Our Romanist carefully locks the door, lights up the candles, kneels before the cross, and beats his breast with his clenched right hand, till it rings again in a hollow sound. It is probably a Friday, a day of penance : the good man looks pale and weak. I know the reason—he has made but one meal on that day, and that on fish ; had he tasted meat, he feels assured he should have subjected his soul to the pains of hell. But the mortifications of the day are not over. He unlocks a small cupboard, and takes out a skull, which he kisses, and places upon the table at the foot of the crucifix. He then strips off part of his clothes, and with a scourge, composed of small twisted ropes hardened with wax, lays stoutly to the right and left, till his bare skin is ready to burst with accumulated blood.

The discipline, as it is called, being over, he mutters several prayers, turning to every picture in the room. He then rises to go to bed; but before he ventures into it, he puts his finger into a little cup which hangs at a short distance over his pillow, and sprinkles, with the fluid it contains, the bed and the room in various directions, and finally moistens his forehead in the form of a cross. The cup, you must know, contains holy water—water in which a priest has put some salt, making over it the sign of the cross several times, and saying some prayers, which the Church of Rome has inserted for this purpose in the mass-book. The use of that water, as our Roman Catholic has been taught to believe, is to prevent the devil from approaching the places and things which have been recently sprinkled with it; and he does not feel himself safe in his bed without the precaution which I have described. The holy water has, besides, an internal and spiritual power of washing away venial sins—those slight sins, I mean, which, according to the Romanists, if unrepented, or unwashed away by holy water, or the sign of the cross made by the hand of a bishop, or some other five or six methods, which I will not trouble you with, will keep the venial sinner in purgatory for a certain time. The operations of the devout Roman Catholic are probably not yet over. On the other side of the holy water cup, there hangs a frame holding a large cake of wax, with figures raised by a mould, not unlike a large butter-pat. It is an *Agnus Dei*, blest by the pope, which is not to be had except it can be imported from Rome. I believe the wax is kneaded with some earth from the place where the bones of the supposed martyrs are dug up. Whoever possesses one of these spiritual treasures, enjoys the benefit of a great number of indulgences; for each kiss impressed on the wax gives him the whole value of fifty or one hundred days employed in doing penance and good works; the amount of which is to be struck off the debt which he has to pay in purgatory.

I should not wonder if our good man, before laying himself to sleep, were to feel about his neck for his rosary or beads. Perhaps he has one of a particular value, and like that which I was made to wear next my skin, when a boy. A priest had brought it from Rome, where it had been made, if we believe the certificates, of bits of the very stones with which the first martyr, Stephen, was put to death. Being satisfied that the rosary hangs still on his neck, he arranges its companion, the scapulary, formed of two square pieces of the stuff which is exclusively worn by some religious order. By means of the scapulary, he is assured either that the Virgin Mary will not allow him to remain in purgatory beyond the Saturday next to the day of his death; or he is made partaker of all the penances and good works performed by the religious of the order to which the scapulary belongs. At last, having said a prayer to the angel who, he believes, keeps a constant guard over him, the devout Romanist composes himself to sleep, touching his forehead, his breast, and the two shoulders, to form the figure of a cross. The prayers and ceremonies of the morning are not unlike those of the night. Armed with the sprinkling of holy water, he proceeds to mass: if it happens to be one of the privileged days in which souls may be delivered out of purgatory, you will see him saying a certain number of prayers at different altars. He will repeat his rosary in honour of the Virgin Mary, dropping through his fingers either fifty-five or seventy-seven beads, which are strung in the form of a necklace. There may be a blessing with the *Sacrament*, which the good Catholic will not lose, for the sake of the plenary indulgence which the pope grants to such as are present. On that occasion you would see him kneeling and beating his breast, while the priest, in a splendid cloak of silk and gold, in the midst of lighted candles and the smoke of frankincense, makes the sign of the cross with a consecrated wafer, inclosed between two pieces of glass set in gold.—It would, indeed, be

an endless task were I to enumerate all the methods and contrivances of this kind recommended by the Church of Rome to all her members, and practised by all who are not careless of their spiritual concerns.—These are facts which no honest Roman Catholic will venture to deny. I, therefore, ask whether, since revelation is the only means we have of distinguishing between religion and superstition—between things and acts which really can influence our manner of being when we shall be removed to the invisible world; and fanciful contrivances which there is no reason to suppose connected with our spiritual welfare—I ask whether the whole system of the Church of Rome, for the attainment of Christian virtue, is not a chain of superstitious practices, calculated to accustom the mind to imaginary fear, and fly to the Church for fanciful remedies? St. Paul had a prophetic eye on this adulterated Christianity when he cautioned the Colossians¹, saying: *Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day; Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not, taste not, handle not, which all are to perish with the using) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have, indeed, a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body. I cannot conceive a more perfect resemblance than that which exists between the picture of a devout Romanist, and the will-worship described in this passage. Observe the distinction of days, the prohibition of certain meats, the wor-*

¹ Chap. ii.

shipping of angels, the numerous ordinances, the mortification and neglect of the body ; and, most of all, the losing hold of the Head, Christ, and substituting a constant endeavour to *increase* spiritually by *fleshly*, that is, external means, instead of fortifying by a simple and spiritual worship, the *bands and joints* through which alone the Christian can have nourishment, *and increase with the increase of God.*

R. I confess that the likeness is very striking. But I wish to know if all the *will-worship* of the Romanists is fully recommended by their Church.

A. It is, in the most solemn and powerful manner. You have only to look into the devotional books which are used among the Romanists, and you will find their bishops encouraging this kind of religious discipline in the most unqualified terms. I could read to you innumerable passages confirming and recommending more *fleshly ordinances* than ever the Jews observed : and this, too, in English Roman Catholic books, which, for fear of censure on the part of the Protestants, are generally more shy of disclosing the whole system of their Church, than those published abroad. But what settles the point at once, and shews that it is the Church of Rome, and not any private individual, that adulterates the character and temper of Christian virtue, I have only to refer you to their Common Prayer-book, which they call the *Breviary*. Now that is a book not only published and confirmed by three popes, but which they oblige their whole clergy to read daily, for at least an hour and a half. I say for *an hour and a half*, not meaning that the duty of reading the Breviary is measured *by time*, but because the most rapid utterance of what must be *read in an audible voice*, will not make the time daily employed on the Breviary much less. Such, indeed, is the importance which the Church of Rome attaches to that book, that she declares any clergyman or monk who omits, even less than an eighth part of the appointed daily reading, guilty of sin worthy of hell,—a mortal sin, which de-

prives man of the grace of God. The *Breviary* contains psalms and collects, and lives of Saints, for every day of the year. Those lives are given as examples of what the Church of Rome declares to be Christian perfection, and her members are, of course, urged to imitate them as far as it may possibly be in every one's power. Now, I can assure you, having been for many years forced to read the *Breviary* daily, that there is not one instance of a Saint, whose worship is not grounded, by the Church of Rome, mainly upon the most extravagant practice of external ceremonies, and the most shocking use of their imaginary virtue of penance.

R. What do they mean by penance?

A. The voluntary infliction of pain on themselves to expiate their sins.

R. Do they not believe in the atonement of Christ?

A. They believe that the atonement is enough to save them from hell, but not from a temporal punishment of sin.

R. But have they not *plenary indulgences* to satisfy for that temporal punishment?

A. So they believe; but the truth is, that they cannot understand themselves upon the subject of penance and indulgences. Penance, however, the Romanist Church recommends even by depraving the sense of the Gospel in their translations. As there is nothing in the New Testament which can make self-inflicted pain a Christian virtue, the Romanists, wanting a text to support their practices, have rendered the third verse of the 13th chapter of Luke, "unless ye be *penitent*, ye shall all alike perish." Yet, this was not enough for their purpose, and as the same sentence is repeated in the 5th verse, there they slipped in the word *penance*. Their translation of that verse is, "unless ye shall do *penance*, you shall all alike perish." By the use of this word they make their laity believe, that both confession, which they call *penance*, and all the bodily mortifications which go among them by the same name, are commanded by Christ.

R. That, Sir, I look upon as very unfair.

A. And the more so, my friend, as in the original Gospel, the word used by the inspired writer is the same in both verses, and cannot by any possibility mean any thing but a *change of the mind*, which we properly express by the word *repent*.

R. What, Sir, is the origin of their attachment to bodily mortification ?

A. A mean estimate of the atonement of Christ in some, and, in others, the example of some fanatics, whom, at an early period of the corruptions of Christianity, Rome declared to be saints and patterns of evangelical virtue. The monks, who took them for their models, gained an unbounded influence in the Church : and both by the practice of some enthusiasts among them, and by the stories of miracles, which they reported as being the reward of their bodily mortification, confirmed the opinion of the great merit of penance among the laity. Here, also, the aid which the doctrines invented by Rome give to each other, contributed to increase the error : for, as the popes teach that the *indulgences* which they grant are taken from the treasure of merits collected by the Saints, it is the interest of those who expect to escape from purgatory by the aid of indulgences, that the treasure of penances be well stocked ; and they greatly enjoy the accounts of wonderful mortifications which their Church gives them in her Prayer-book.

R. Do you think those accounts extravagant ?

A. I will give two or three, and you shall judge. You know that St. Patrick is one of the most favourite Saints among the Irish Roman Catholics, as having been the first who introduced Christianity into their island. The Church of Rome gives the following account of his daily religious practices, holding him up, of course, as a pattern, which if few can fully copy, every one will be the more perfect as he endeavours to imitate. The *Breviary* tells the Roman Catholics, that when their patron Saint was a slave, having his

master's cattle under his care, he used to rise before daylight, under the snows and rains of winter, to begin his usual task of praying *one hundred times* in the day, and again *one hundred times* in the night. When he was made a bishop, we are told that he repeated every day the one hundred and fifty psalms of the psalter, with a collection of canticles and hymns, and two hundred collects besides. He made it also a daily duty to kneel three hundred times, and to make the sign of the cross with his hand, eight hundred times a day. In the night he recited one hundred psalms, and knelt two hundred times—passed one third of it up to the chin in cold water, repeating fifty psalms more, and then rested for two or three hours on a stone pavement.

R. I cannot believe it possible for a man to perform what you have said, unless he had the strength and velocity of a steam engine. That account must be false.

A. I will not enter into the question of its probability; all I have to do with, is, the principle which it inculcates and proposes to the Roman Catholics. External ceremonies, and a course of self-murdering practices, are proposed by the Church of Rome, in nine out of ten lives of her Saints, as objects of imitation. In the same spirit, St. Catherine of Sienna is represented as so addicted to the practice of fasting, that heaven, to indulge her in the performance of that pretended virtue, kept her, by miracle, without food from Ash-Wednesday till Whit-Sunday. So the *Breviary* proclaims before the face of the world.

R. But does not our Church recommend fasting as a religious practice?

A. The practice of checking our appetites, even those which we may indulge without sin, is a most useful exercise of the powers of the will over the inclinations of our passions. The man who cannot abstain from some savoury food, and is a slave to the cravings of his stomach, is little apt to control his inclinations when tempted to open sin. Upon this princi-

ple, and justly fearing that if the memory of fast was abolished, men might be inclined to believe that Protestantism encouraged gluttony and excess, the Church of England recommends a rational abstinence on certain days, which, especially when it is made to produce some savings to bestow upon the poor, must be acceptable in the sight of God. But neither are these fasts enjoined under the threat of damnation, as we find them in the Church of Rome, nor do they consist in a superstitious anxiety about the quality or quantity of food. The Roman Catholic fast is intended to produce *pain and suffering*, which is the object of their penances: ours is a check laid upon indulgence, an abstinence from *pleasure*. Theirs tends to that *neglecting of the body*, which St. Paul condemns (Coloss. ii.) and is the cause of weakness and disease: ours, to *keeping it under*, and giving ourselves to prayer, and even that is left to the discretion and free will of every individual.

R. How far does the Church of Rome recommend the infliction of pain, as penance?

A. To an excess that destroys every year many well-meaning and ardent persons, especially young women of that communion. These well-meaning but deluded creatures read the lives of Saints set forth by their Church, and there they find many females who are said to have arrived at great perfection, by living, like St. Elizabeth of Portugal, one half of the year on bread and water; besides the constant use of scourging their bodies, sleeping on the naked ground, wearing bandages with points that run into the flesh, plunging into freezing water, and ten thousand other methods of gradually destroying life. The Roman Catholic priests would make us believe that they always recommend penance in moderation. But when a young, tender, and ardent mind is taught that God is pleased with voluntary suffering, and reads that the Church of Rome has made Saints of those who killed themselves by penances, every thing which falls

short of actual self-murder will assume the appearance of moderation. The Church of Rome, in her Prayer-book or Breviary, commends St. Theresa, because "*her ardour in punishing the body was so vehement, as to make her use hair shirts, chains, nettles, scourges, and even to roll herself among thorns, regardless of a diseased constitution.*" These are the words of the Breviary: from which the enthusiastic Roman Catholic properly infers, that to disregard a diseased constitution, and hasten death, is a virtue. That such is the effect of the pope's lives of the Saints, is clear from what the Breviary relates of another female Saint, called Rose of Lima. She, it is said in the Roman Catholic Prayer-book, "from a desire to imitate St. Catherine," wore, day and night, three folds of an iron chain round her waist, a belt set with small needles, and an iron crown armed inside with points, all next the skin. She made to herself a bed of the unpolished trunks of trees, and filled up the chinks with pieces of broken pottery. The Breviary adds, that she did all this in spite of her "tortures from sickness," and was therefore frequently visited by saints, angels, and even our Saviour from heaven.

R. But, do Roman Catholics really believe in those visits?

A. A sincere Roman Catholic cannot disbelieve what his own Church so constantly teaches, without entertaining strange suspicions against the veracity of the organ and ground of his faith. Nothing can be more positively asserted, than these supernatural wonders; nothing more frequently repeated, than the thousands of miracles contained in the Breviary. If, therefore, a Roman Catholic believes them all, or the greatest part, he must be credulous like a child; if he disbelieves them all, or the greatest part, he must look on the popes and the Church of Rome, either as a set of deceivers, or of old women.

R. Are the miracles reported so unworthy of belief?

A. I could give you at once a satisfactory answer, just by relating some of the stories of miracles which the Roman Catholic Prayer-book contains. But I wish to settle a general point on this subject of miracles. What is your notion of a miracle?

R. I must repeat what I said when you asked me the same question as to superstition. I believe I know what a miracle is, and yet I cannot express myself clearly upon the subject.

A. A miracle is an evident interposition of God's power, by means of a change in the order which he has established in the visible world. I hope I shall be able to make my meaning clearer, by a very familiar illustration. Do you know the construction of a clock?

R. No, Sir.

A. So much the better for my purpose. What would you say if you saw the hand of the church clock go backward?

R. I should say the clock was out of repair.

A. What, if you saw it first point twelve, then instantly eleven, then in another moment run forward to one?

R. I should say somebody is behind moving the wheels: the watchmaker must be there.

A. Could you, without knowing the mechanism of the clock, be certain that the extraordinary change in its working was not the effect of mere accident?

R. If the clock had only stopt, or gone the wrong way, I might have supposed its being the effect of accident! but the change having, as we may say, a meaning, the experience of clocks which I have had all my life, is enough to convince me that the alteration in the course of the clock's working cannot be the effect of chance.

A. Suppose, besides, that a man had told you, while the clock was going regularly, that he was acquainted with the maker; that he knew he was behind the hour-plate, and that, in proof of this, he would request him

to move the hand backwards and forwards. Would you believe what he asserted, if you saw the clock acting accordingly?

R. Most certainly.

A. Well, then, if what we have said of the clock and the watchmaker, we apply, with due reverence, to the world which we see, and its great author, God; we shall have a pretty correct idea of miracles, and something like a rule to judge of them. The world, you know, and every thing in it, proceeds by established and invariable rules, infinitely more wonderful and regular than the pointing of a clock, or the working of the most admirable piece of machinery. Without being able to penetrate into the manner in which life is supported, we feel no doubt that when a person has been laid four days in the grave, he cannot be brought to life by any regular operation of nature. Now, imagine yourself standing in the crowd which surrounded our Saviour before the grave of Lazarus. Observe how, lifting up his eyes, Jesus addresses himself to his Father, the Creator of heaven and earth, the author and giver of life; and says, *Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me: and I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth: and he that was dead came forth*¹. Would this change in the usual laws of nature, this returning of the breath of life which had fled, be enough to convince you that the Maker of the world, though unseen, was really present and in direct communication with the visible person who had addressed him?

R. Most assuredly: just as I could not doubt that the watchmaker was personally present, by seeing the clock-hand move against the regular and established order, at the desire of his friend, whom you supposed standing with me in the church-yard.

¹ John xi. 41—44.

A. Let us still proceed with our illustration. Suppose that all that had passed between you, your friend, and the watchmaker, being observed by the people of the village, some boy came and told you, "Sir, while some of my companions were playing in the churchyard, the hour for school being on the point to strike, one of them cried out, Good mister watchmaker, put back the hand of the clock, and let us play another hour. As he said this the clock went back : this, Sir, is now done very frequently, and not only in our village, but all over the country."—Would you give the boy any credit?

R. I think I should be more inclined to give him a box on the ear?

A. Why?

R. Do you imagine me such a fool as to believe that a sensible man would be spoiling his clock, or altering the course of its working, to indulge the fancy of every idler? Why, Sir, I would not believe such a thing even upon better testimony than that of the children.

A. You are perfectly in the right, my friend; and if you keep in mind the principles by which you have decided upon the case I have supposed, it will be very easy for you to form a correct opinion of the spirit which prevails in the Church of Rome on the subject of miracles. The *Breviary*, to which I have so often referred in the course of the present conversations, speaks of miracles performed by the popish Saints, as if they were the most frequent occurrences within the spiritual dominions of the pope. Almost every Saint's life ends with an assurance that he performed "*innumerable* miracles." Of the trifling occasions of the pretended miracles it is impossible to give you an idea, but by relating the stories themselves. I will give you a few out of hundreds. To exalt the authority of the pope, has at all times been the purpose of all the Romish contrivances. There is a ludicrous instance of this in the life of Pope St. John; which the Roman Catholic Prayer-book gives annually on the 27th of

May. The whole Romanist clergy are informed on that day, that Pope John being on a journey to Corinth, and in want of a quiet and comfortable horse, borrowed one, which the lady of a certain nobleman used to ride. The animal carried the pope remarkably well; but when the lady attempted to use it again, she was thrown off every time she ventured upon the saddle. The Romish Prayer-book explains this with great gravity, saying, that "the horse felt indignant at having to carry a woman, after having had the vicar of Christ upon his back."

R. I imagine, Sir, that the Romanists would say, that that miracle had a very important object; such as establishing the supremacy of the pope.

A. Such evasions are indeed very common among them; but no sensible man can be at a loss to show their futility. Are not the Romanists ashamed to suppose, that when God had been silent in his Holy Scriptures concerning Rome and the pope, he would, by a kind of after-thought, make a horse become the expounder of his will? There are also a number of similar miracles told in the *Breviary*, evidently with the view of raising a great veneration for the relics which the pope keeps at Rome, in order to draw people to visit that city, and spend their money among the inhabitants, whom his bad government keeps in a state of idleness and poverty. In the bull or proclamation which has been published for the *jubilee* at Rome, in 1825, the pope invites all Christians to take a journey to his great city, where, besides the benefit of a plenary indulgence, they will have the comfort of approaching the sepulchre of St. Peter and St. Paul; who are supposed to be buried in a certain place, though no mortal being has ever seen their bodies. They may also behold the very manger in which our Saviour was laid at his birth, and all the instruments of his passion; that is to say, the cross on which he hung, the nails which fastened him to it, the lance which pierced his side, the very crown of thorns.

which was upon his head; for the pope pretends to be in possession of all these relics. You are to observe, that the existence of such objects not having been heard of for more than three hundred years after the death of Christ, it was necessary to impose them on the credulity of the world by means of pretended miracles. So we are told, that the mother of the emperor Constantine having employed some men to dig in Mount Calvary, three crosses were found: and being in doubt which was the one on which our Saviour died, she applied them successively on a dead body, which came to life again when the true cross touched it. This story is made up of a set of falsehoods, which were put together successively in the course of some years. But about the true cross, supposed to have been found at Jerusalem, more than three hundred years after Christ, not a word was ever heard till after the death of Helen, and her son Constantine. We have still the works of Eusebius, a Christian bishop, who lived near Jerusalem at the time when Helen visited the Holy Land. He says a great deal about her devotion; but though he mentions the discovery (I believe it a *pretended* discovery) of the cave where the body of Jesus was laid, he does not say a word about the cross. But when, some years after, the story of the true cross was given out, and a piece of wood was shown, as being the real cross on which the Saviour died, the emperor Constantius (a bad and very superstitious man) and the men in power could stop the mouth of any one who should attempt to expose or contradict the imposture. So much for the true cross, the bits of which that are worshipped through the Catholic countries would, if collected in one place, amount to more splinters than might be taken from the main-mast of a man of war. How the nails, lance, and crown of thorns were proved to be those used at our Saviour's passion, we are not told. When people have believed in the true cross, they will easily worship the nails, and even our Sa-

viour's coat, which was kept at Constantinople before that city was taken by the Turks. These impostures were soon received as Gospel by the establishment of holidays in their honour, and by the adding a miracle now and then, when some new object of idolatry was to be palmed on the credulity of our forefathers. The *Breviary* gives a curious one to show the sanctity of another of the Roman relics. It informs us, that about the time when it became a fashion to discover every thing that had belonged to Christ and his apostles, and popes, emperors, and empresses joined to set up new relics, the pope was in possession of an iron chain, with which St. Peter had, four hundred years before, been bound at Rome. The emperor's wife, on a visit to Jerusalem, received there, as a present, another chain, which, according to the bishop of that city, had been on Peter's hands when he was liberated from prison by an angel. Having brought it to Rome, the pope took both chains in his hands, and bringing them near each other to compare them, both joined into one at a jerk, so as to appear but one piece worked by the same smith.

R. These, Sir, are more like jugglers' tricks than miracles.

A. Rome, however, has a great advantage over poor jugglers, who are closely watched by the eyes of an incredulous multitude, where every man is anxious to discover the tricks. But the pope, by nursing up every Roman Catholic in the certain belief of such stories, needs no proof or testimony, not even common caution, to palm the most monstrous miracles upon the people. What man of common sense would remain in the Church of England, if our prayer-book had it, as a most certain fact, that Westminster Abbey had been built at Paris, in France; and that, some hundred years ago, it had taken a flight to the French coast, opposite to Dover: and, having rested there for a few years, had, in a second flight, placed itself where it now stands?

R. Has the Breviary any story like this?

A. Perfectly like it. It relates that the house in which the Virgin Mary lived, in the land of Judea, was carried through the air by angels to the coast of Dalmatia, and from thence to Loretto, in the pope's dominions, where it has been worth millions to the popish clergy; such is the number of pilgrims that used to visit it, and still visit it, and the large and valuable presents which, for many centuries, have been sent by Roman Catholic princes and noblemen, to ornament it.

R. There is such falsehood on the face of that story, that I would not believe any thing in the shape of a miracle, through the same channel.

A. Yet there are Roman Catholics, who, rather than give way to the Protestants, will endanger the credit of the whole Gospel, by asserting that he who will not believe in the miracles which are reported on the authority of the Church of Rome, has no reason to receive those of the Gospel. So blind and headstrong is party-spirit! Now, if there was no other reason to reject the testimony of Rome upon these points, but that she does to this day propagate stories which she knows to be false, such as the monstrous fable of the house of Loretto, nothing else would be wanting to condemn their irreverent and unfair comparison. Besides this, consider, my friend, the difference between believing the testimony of the Apostles, whose attestations we have in writing, and giving credit to the most idle reports, of which nobody knows the origin: between believing witnesses who sealed their testimony with their blood, and trusting popes and cardinals, who are enriched by their supposed miracles, and idle monks, to whom a new saint of their order is worth more than an estate of a thousand acres: between miracles performed in the midst of incredulous and powerful enemies, and wonders brought to light by the combined influence of emperors and popes, and publishing among people who, being brought up

in the most superstitious credulity, expect wonders at every turn!

R. A man must surely be blind to make the comparison!

A. The credulity, my friend, which such a prayer-book as the Breviary cannot fail to foster in the Romish Church, must make every sincere Roman Catholic an exceptionable witness on miraculous subjects. Men think they see what they wish to see: the least circumstance is turned into evidence of a miracle by credulous minds, impressed with the desire of supporting the interest of their Church, and taught by that Church that there is *piety* in implicit belief, and sin in caution and doubt. I cannot acquit the leaders of the Church of Rome of at least a connivance with a system of imposture, when I see the present pope declaring a silly monk a saint worthy of public worship; and relating, as one of his miracles, that by making the sign of the cross over two birds, which were on the table, dressed and dished, they took flight, and disappointed the company. No,—this is an old story, repeated of many saints; and those who publish it upon their own authority must know it to be false. I will not charge with the same kind of design every one of our folks who firmly believe in the miracles of prince Hohenloe. As they all relate to diseases, the least accidental change for the better produces the strongest assurance of a miracle in those who have heated their fancies in the full expectation of seeing it worked. We will not, therefore, compare their testimony with that of the apostles and first disciples, till these good Romanists shall, in large numbers, publish the resurrection of one of their friends, publicly put to death, and attest the fact with their blood. This is what the apostles and the immediate disciples of Jesus did. The Church of Rome manages the attestations of her miracles in a very different manner: she assures us that no person is declared a saint by her authority, without the performance of three remarkable miracles;

but, by an assumed air of caution, she commonly defers the trial of these miracles till some hundred years after the death of the candidate for saintship. This spirit of delusion, this determination of allowing the people to be deceived in every possible way that can attach them to the Romish communion, is most glaringly evinced in the annual jugglery performed at Naples, under the eyes of the pope. The patron saint of that town is a Saint Januarius, part of whose blood, though shed in martyrdom, as they say, (for there is no dependence on these reports, even as to the existence of some of the Roman Catholic saints,) more than fifteen hundred years ago, is still preserved in a vial. On the day of the saint's festival, the bishop, surrounded by a crowd of priests, and a multitude of lighted tapers, and clouds of the smoke of frankincense, takes the vial in his hands, where a red lump appears in an upper division. The people in crowds are kneeling in the church expecting the yearly miracle with the greatest anxiety, while the bishop handles the vial every way, till the lump begins to melt, and falls in drops into the lower part of the glass. Upon this, the bells are rung, the guns are fired, and the whole town is in a state of rapture. The trick is so gross that there is not a priest or a man of common sense at Naples, that is not convinced that the red clot is a certain composition which melts with very little heat—the heat that the hands of a priest and a crowded church will produce. Sometimes it is a longer time in being brought about, and the populace, for whom the juggle is performed, are in a state of great fear and discontent. On one of these occasions, a very excellent friend of mine, an English officer, was near the priests; but the melting being delayed, he was advised by one of them to retire, for the mob would have torn him to pieces, from a notion that the miracle was delayed on account of his being a Protestant. When the French, during the Revolutionary war, were in possession of Naples, the priests wished to raise a tumult against them, and on

the day of Saint Januarius, the blood would not melt. The mob were ready to take up arms, when the French general sent word to the archbishop, that if the miracle was not performed instantly, he would play the artillery upon his palace. This broad hint had its desired effect: the blood began to drop, and all was quiet. A Church which thus boldly tampers with the credulity of her members, and ventures upon a regular annual imposture, will assert any thing in regard to former times. Of saints who lived in early ages, she publishes the most glaring falsehoods, though every man of common learning knows that the records in which they are related are most impudent forgeries. From such documents it is, that Rome amuses her clergy with the miracles of early martyrs, who could not be burnt, though shut up within a house in flames; who would not sink, though thrown into the sea; who came unhurt out of a cauldron of boiling pitch and fat; who lived two or three days with their heads nearly cut off; and who walked three miles with their heads in their hands.

R. Monstrous; and is all that still read in the Roman Catholic prayer-book?

A. It is, day by day, the whole year through, and under heavy penalties for the omission. Were I to translate the stories of saints from the Breviary, you would imagine I was amusing you with tales of goblins and fairies. You would hear of three different saints who have sailed on their cloaks, as if on board a ship, carrying sometimes several monks with them. In that manner, we are assured by the pope, that St. Francis de Paula crossed the Strait of Sicily; St. Raymond de Pennafort, from Majorca to Barcelona; and St. Hyacinth, a large river in Poland, swollen by a flood. You would hear of a lady, St. Frances of Rome, who would stand for a long time in a river without being wet; and who used to quench her thirst with grapes produced, by miracle, in the heart of winter. You would find a St. Peter of Alcantara, who was

provided with a roof of snow, under which he might pass the night, and who made his staff grow into a fig-tree. There is scarcely a Saint who did not begin to work miracles from his birth; nay, we are told of St. Bridget, that she saved her mother from drowning, being as yet in the womb. The bells used to ring of their own accord when Saints were born, as happened with St. John *a Deo*, St. Peter Celestinus, and many others; a swarm of bees built a honey-comb in the hands of St. Ambrose, St. Peter Nolascus, St. Isidore, and several other saintly babes, while in their cradles. Another baby saint had her face changed into a rose, from which her name was given to her. These holy children often speak before they are five months old; as was the case with St. Philip Beniti, who at that age scolded his mother for not giving alms to some begging friars. All these wonders, and ten thousand others still more absurd, are asserted in the Prayer-book of the Church of Rome. I have given a copious collection of them in my *Evidence against Catholicism*, where, lest any one should suspect I was not in earnest, I have copied the original words in Latin, at the bottom of the page.

R. I cannot help thinking that though the Church of Rome is not the best school for Christian instruction, it must afford a kind of spiritual amusement (spiritual, I say, because I cannot find another word) to her followers. Her ceremonies, her miracles, her relics, must afford an agreeable variety to those who have never doubted her creed.

A. Ah, my friend, nothing can be more deceitful than the appearance of that church. There is more misery produced by her laws and institutions than I can possibly describe, though I have drunk her cup of bitterness to the dregs. In the first place, a sincere mind, which is made to depend for the hope of salvation on any thing but faith and unbounded trust in the Saviour, can never enjoy that Christian peace which passeth all understanding." I have known

some of the best and most conscientious Roman Catholics of whom that Church can ever boast; my own mother and sisters were among them; I have been Confessor not a few years, and heard the true state of mind of the most religious nuns, and such as were looked upon as living Saints by all the inhabitants of my town. From this intimate knowledge of their state, I do assure you that they are, for the greatest part, so full of doubts about their salvation, as not unfrequently to be driven to madness. In their anxiety to accumulate *merits* (for their Church teaches them that their penances and religious practices are deserving of reward in heaven) they involve themselves in a maze of external practices. Then comes the fear of sin in the very things which they undertake under the notion of pleasing God; and as they believe that their works are to be weighed and valued in strict justice, the sincerity of their hearts cannot help discovering not only that they are nothing worth, but that sin is often mixed with their performance. In this state they are never impressed with the true scriptural doctrine, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, whenever the sinner with a lively faith receives him as his only Saviour. They are not taught that good works are the fruit of true faith; but that they bear a true share with Christ in the work of our salvation. They are thus forced by their doctrines to look to themselves (partly at least) for the hope of heaven; and what can be the consequence but the most agonizing fear? With the view of heaven and hell perpetually before their eyes, and a strong belief that the obtaining the one and avoiding the other depends on the performance of a multitude of self-imposed duties, as complicated and more difficult than those of the ceremonial law of the Jews; what can be the result but distracting anxiety? When a Protestant is conscious that he does not make the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ a means to deceive himself and indulge his passions; his trust in the "full, perfect, and sufficient

sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world" which was made on the cross, removes all fear from his soul. In his progress through the stormy sea of life, he does not, as the Romanist, cling with one hand to Christ, and depend on the strength of the other to break the waves. The poor deluded pupil of the Popish school, looks (as a man always does in cases of great danger) not to the stronger, but the weaker ground of his dependence for safety. Fear, consequently, predominates in his heart. "Mind your swimming hand," say his Priests, "ply it stoutly, or Christ will allow you to sink."—"Hold fast on Him who is powerful to save," say all true Protestants, in the language of the Bible: "All that you have to do is to throw the weight of your sins and infirmities upon Christ." This is the only faith that can produce the fulness of "joy and hope in believing."

R. But are not good works necessary to salvation?

A. The truly Apostolic doctrine on that point will be best understood by looking to the direct consequence of sin. Besides, that the whole Scripture is full of loud warnings against wickedness, the Apostle expressly says: *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolâters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*¹. So that there can be no doubt, that, if we wish to be saved, we must renounce sin, or, as we are told by our Saviour, we must repent; that is, as the original word expresses it, we must *change the mind* from the pursuit of unrighteousness. By turning away from sin, and placing our full trust or faith in Christ, we are pardoned, and become justified in the sight of God. We then are made living branches of the true vine, and the spiritual life which we receive from the trunk, cannot fail to

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

produce fruit unto life eternal. Here then is the essential difference between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification. The Roman Catholic believes that his good works are, in part at least, the means of his justification, and is anxious to secure and increase it by numerous external practices, especially by self-inflicted misery: the true Protestant feels assured on the strength of Revelation, that as he turns with his whole heart, and accepts pardon through Christ's blood, his sins are pardoned without reserve. The work of justification or acquittal is thereby perfect: and the Spirit of Christ proceeds without delay in the subsequent work of sanctification. The Protestant has but one ground of salutary fear, lest he should wilfully and deliberately turn again from Christ to sin; but this fear is allayed by the certainty given him by the same Scripture, that God is faithful, and that it is God "who worketh in us both to will and to do, of his good pleasure¹."—The system of popish justificationis, I repeat to you, in the words of that truly great and calumniated man, Luther, "a plain tyranny, a racking and crucifying of consciences." He knew this from his own experience, for, like myself, he had in his youth tried it in the full sincerity of his heart. In order to secure his salvation, and following the advice of the Church of Rome, he made himself a monk, and most conscientiously kept the rule of his order; but he found, what I have frequently seen in those who bind themselves with the popish vows, that he was on the way to distraction and downright madness. "When I was a monk," he says, "I endeavoured as much as possible to live after the strait rule of my own order; I was wont to shrive (confess) myself with great devotion, and to reckon up all my sins, being always very contrite before, and I returned to confession very often, and thoroughly performed the penance that was enjoined unto me: yet

¹ Phil. ii. 13.

for all this my conscience could never be fully certified, but was always in doubt, and said this or that thou hast not done rightly : thou wast not contrite and sorrowful enough : this sin thou didst omit in thy confession, and so forth. Therefore, the more I went about to help my weak, wavering, and afflicted conscience, by men's traditions, the more weak, and doubtful, and the more afflicted I was. And thus the more I observed men's traditions, the more I transgressed them, and in seeking after righteousness, by mine order, I could never attain unto it."—To the truth of this statement I myself can bear the most ample testimony. In fact, with the exception of the persecuting spirit of the Church of Rome, I know nothing more odious and mischievous than her contrivances after the righteousness or sanctity which she recommends ; they are indeed *a plain tyranny, a racking and crucifying of the conscience.*

R. What contrivances do you mean ?

A. I mean the popish laws, by which, in order, as they say, to make their clergy more perfect, men are led into the most fatal snares, even to the loss of their souls, or at least to the ruin of their happiness. It is, indeed, a consequence of the Romanist doctrine of good works, that they should lay intolerable burthens on the necks of well-disposed Christians. Hence the pope has made it necessary for his clergy never to marry ; and for both men and women who, striving after the imaginary perfection of works, make themselves monks, or friars, or nuns, to make vows of never marrying, of obeying the superior of their convents, and possessing no property. They also bind themselves to keep the rule of their order, which gives forty or fifty commandments, besides those of God ; and which, by their vows, they consider as binding as if they were all in the Bible. As far as this goes, such a system would be a dangerous absurdity : for what can be more unreasonable than to endanger salvation by self-imposed duties, when we know how difficult it is for man to

keep the plain laws of God? But as the object of all these human ordinances is, that the Church of Rome may be able to make an external show of the sanctity of her unmarried priests, and the self-denial of her professed monks and nuns; the popes, fearing lest those who undertake these duties, should soon find them impracticable, and shame the Church by resuming their Christian liberty—the popes, I say, most unfeelingly, and with the greatest disregard of men's salvation, have induced all Roman Catholic governments to force clergymen, friars, and nuns, to abide by their profession; so that whoever finds himself unable to live in celibacy, or within the walls of a convent, must fly his country, under the dreadful certainty that, if taken in the attempt, he shall be punished with a cruel imprisonment during the rest of his life.

R. That is certainly a piece of tyranny which I have not sufficient words to describe.

A. You would, indeed, want words to express your feelings, if you had seen the effects of that proud and insolent despotism of the Romish Church, as I have. Indeed I am touching upon a subject of which I cannot speak without the most lively pain and indignation. When St. Paul enumerates the advantages which the unmarried Christians had in the early days of the gospel, he uses the greatest caution. "This (says the apostle) I speak for your own profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you." The Church of Rome, on the contrary, carried away by her pride, uses every art to induce young persons of either sex to bind themselves with religious vows of chastity for life. All her books of devotion, and especially her established Prayer-book, are full of the praises of virginity. She carries her absurd, not to say wicked extravagance, to the point of asserting of one of her female Saints (Saint Rose of Lima, whom I have already mentioned) that she made a vow of perpetual chastity at the age of five years. There was indeed a time when

children were bound by their parents to become monks and nuns for life; an engagement which they were forced to keep when they grew up. But now the Church of Rome allows boys and girls of sixteen to take the religious vows, and, having done so, she puts them under the guard of the Roman Catholic governments, who, frightened with the spiritual threats of the popes, employ their power and means of coercion to make them prisoners of the Church for life. It would make your very heart sick to see the nunneries in Spain. They are large houses with high walls like prisons; having small windows at a great distance from the ground, and guarded by strong and close iron bars, bristled over with long spikes. As it is the custom among Roman Catholics to send most of their little girls to be educated by the nuns, the poor innocents become attached to their teachers, who are besides exceedingly anxious to gain recruits to their order. The girls are petted till they come of age to take the vows. The priests, who, being not allowed to marry, feel a strong jealousy of those who take a young and amiable wife, are always ready to advise their young penitents to take the veil. In this manner a great number of unsuspecting girls are yearly entrapped in the Roman Catholic Church. Even in England nunneries have been on the increase of late years. Some of these poor prisoners continue in their slavery without reluctance: many feel unhappy, but submit from the shame of changing their minds, and because, even in this country, where the Protestant law would protect their leaving the convent, their relations would look upon them as reprobates, and their priests would harass them to death. In Roman Catholic countries, the hopelessness of their case obliges many to bear their unhappy lot patiently. But some are driven to desperation, and I have known instances which prove that the pope is a more unfeeling tyrant than any slave-master in Algiers.

R. Have you really seen a poor female dying for liberty, and yet kept like a criminal in bondage?

A. I have known many; but there was one among those unhappy victims, whose sufferings harrow my mind and heart whenever they come to my recollection. You must, however, be made acquainted with her melancholy story; but to save myself the pain of telling it anew, let me read it out of my *Evidence against Catholicism*:

"The eldest daughter of a family intimately acquainted with mine, was brought up in the convent of St. Agnes at Seville, under the care of her mother's sister, the abbess of that female community. The circumstances of the whole transaction were so public at Seville, and the subsequent judicial proceedings have given them such notoriety, that I do not feel bound to conceal names. *Maria Francisca Barreiro*, the unfortunate subject of this account, grew up, a lively and interesting girl, in the convent; while the younger sister enjoyed the advantages of an education at home. The mother formed an early design of devoting her eldest daughter to religion, in order to give her less attractive favouritism a better chance of getting a husband. The distant and harsh manner with which she constantly treated Maria Francisca, attached the unhappy girl to her aunt by the ties of the most ardent affection. The time, however, arrived, when it was necessary that she should either leave her, and endure the consequences of her mother's aversion at home, or take the vows, and thus close the gates of the convent upon herself for ever. She preferred the latter course: and came out to pay the last visit to her friends. I met her, almost daily, at the house of one of her relations; where her words and manner soon convinced me that she was a victim of her mother's designing and unfeeling disposition. The father was an excellent man, though timid and undecided. He feared his wife, and was in awe of the monks, who, as usual, were extremely anxious to increase the number of

their female prisoners. Though I was aware of the danger which a man incurs, in Spain, who tries to dissuade a young woman from being a nun, humanity impelled me to speak seriously to the father, entreating him not to expose a beloved child to spend her life in hopeless regret for lost liberty. He was greatly moved by my reasons; but the impression I made was soon obliterated. The day for Maria Francisca's taking the veil was at length fixed; and though I had a most pressing invitation to be present at the ceremony, I determined not to see the wretched victim at the altar. On the preceding day I was called from my stall at the Royal Chapel to the confessional. A lady, quite covered by her black veil, was kneeling at the grate through which females speak to the confessor. As soon as I took my seat, the well-known voice of Maria Francisca made me start with surprise. Bathed in tears, and scarcely able to speak without betraying her state to the people who knelt near the confessional box, by the sobs which interrupted her words, she told me she wished only to unburden her heart to me, before she shut herself up for life. Assistance, she assured me, she would not receive; for rather than live with her mother, and endure the obloquy to which her swerving from her announced determination would expose her, 'she would risk the salvation of her soul.' All my remonstrances were in vain. I offered to obtain the protection of the archbishop, and thereby to extricate her from the difficulties in which she was involved. She declined my offer, and appeared as resolute as she was wretched. The next morning she took the veil; and professed at the end of the following year. Her good aunt died soon after; and the nuns, who had allured her into the convent by their caresses, when they perceived that she was not able to disguise her misery, and feared that the existence of a reluctant nun might by her means transpire, became her daily tormentors.

After an absence of three years from Seville, I

found that Maria Francisca had openly declared her aversion to a state, from which nothing but death could save her. She often changed her confessors, expecting comfort from their advice. At last she found a friend in one of the companions of my youth; a man whose benevolence surpasses even the bright genius with which nature has gifted him: though neither has been able to exempt him from the evils to which Spaniards seem to be fated in proportion to their worth. He became her confessor, and in that capacity spoke to her daily. But what could he do against the inflexible tyranny in whose grasp she languished?

“ About this time the approach of Napoleon’s army threw the town into a general consternation, and the convents were opened to such of the nuns as wished to fly. Maria Francisca, whose parents were absent, put herself under the protection of a young prebendary of the cathedral, and by his means reached Cadiz, where I saw her, on my way to England. I shall never forget the anguish with which, after a long conversation, wherein she disclosed to me the whole extent of her wretchedness, she exclaimed *There is no hope for me!* and fell into convulsions.

“ The liberty of Spain from the French invaders was the signal for the fresh confinement of this helpless young woman to her former prison. Here she attempted to put an end to her sufferings by throwing herself into a deep well; but was taken out alive. Her mother was now dead, and her friends instituted a suit of *nullity of profession* before the ecclesiastical court. But the laws of the council of Trent were positive; and she was cast in the trial. Her despair, however, exhausted the little strength which her protracted sufferings had left her, and the unhappy Maria Francisca died soon after, having scarcely reached her twenty-fifth year.”

B. Sir, the history of your unfortunate friend is so horrible, that I wonder how whole nations can conspire to support a tyranny wicked enough to sacrifice

not only the body but the soul of the helpless creatures who fall into its snares. I know that God is infinitely merciful: but does it not strike you that the pope and his Church, provided they keep their slaves, do not care if they are driven to suicide, and all the sins which follow and attend despair?

A. I know that the pope and his advisers are perfectly indifferent about moral evils which arise from the laws which keep up the appearance of infallibility in their Church. Rather than alter her law of celibacy, Rome has allowed her clergy to be for many ages exposed to the most fatal temptations; and for the most part to be involved in the guilt of many a secret, and many an open sin, which might be avoided by the repeal of that law.

R. Does not the pope ever dispense with the law of celibacy?

A. Rome, my friend, never draws back but when fear compels her. The only dispensation I ever heard of was obtained by Bonaparte for Talleyrand, a French bishop. The whole history of papal Rome proves that nothing but absolute compulsion will ever make her change her conduct.

R. Has the pope ceased to maintain what I have heard you call *the Inquisition*?

A. The pope has an *Inquisition* at Rome; a court of law, whose business it is to prevent the propagation of opinions which do not agree with the doctrines of Rome. In this court the judges are priests. The prisoners are taken up upon suspicion, are kept without communication, and sentenced without being told who are the witnesses against them. Under the authority of the pope, the *Inquisition* of Spain put to death by fire *thirty-one thousand nine hundred and twelve persons*, in the course of its existence. The Spanish *Inquisition* has lately been abolished; but the law which condemns to death any Spaniard who does not receive all the articles of the pope's faith, is still in being, and may be called into action by any of the

Spanish bishops, each of whom is now *inquisitor* in his diocese.

R. Do you think that Roman Catholics are bound in conscience to approve such laws?

* *A.* My knowledge of the Church of Rome, and of Spain, where the doctrines and spiritual government of that Church have prevailed for many centuries, thoroughly convince me that *religious persecution* is a direct consequence of the principles which the pope still maintains. But I begin to hope, that, as there are Protestants who, in spite of the *principles* of the Reformation, would persecute for religious dissent from their Church or sect, so there may be sincere Roman Catholics, who, guided by the spirit of the Gospel, feel anxious to remove from their Church the disgrace of her barbarous laws against heretics. The spirit of religious persecution is only human pride disguised under the appearance of zeal for divine truth. Whoever does not allow that other men have as much right as himself to declare their opinions upon religious subjects, will persecute as soon as he has the power. And remember, I pray, that religious persecution does not consist in the severity or cruelty of the punishment for religious dissent: the least molestation on that account is persecution, since it is depriving another man of those *rights of conscience*, to which all are equally entitled.

R. I have heard, Sir, that you were afraid of the admission of Roman Catholics to parliament.

A. So I was, indeed; and considering the sad experience which I have of Roman Catholic intolerance, my fears might (I conceive) be easily excused. I stated what I knew upon the subject of papal intolerance, only with a view that the legislature should not decide on the grounds of any false or disguised evidence. But no sooner was the decision made, than I did every thing in my power (though that is small indeed) to assist the measure in its intended effects of union and reconciliation. No sacrifice on my part would appear

to me too great, if by its means I could contribute to the extinction of religious bigotry, which still injures the best interests of Christianity. May Heaven hasten the day when Christians of all denominations shall be distinguished by the mark which our divine Master appointed: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another!"

R. Amen.

¹ John xiii. 35.

THE END.

